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"All reforms are too late which wait until the tide turns . . . must be not with, but against the stream."—*Author of "The Schönberg-Cotta Family."*

"We are nothing ; Christ is all."—GEORGE FOX.

## THOMAS ELLWOOD.

" He felt that wrong with wrong partakes,  
That nothing stands alone ;  
That whoso gives the motive, makes  
His brother's sin his own :  
And pausing not for doubtful choice  
Of evils great or small,  
He listened to that inward Voice  
Which called away from all.  
  
O Spirit of that early day,  
So pure and strong and true !  
Be with us in the narrow way  
Our faithful fathers knew :  
Give strength the evil to forsake,  
The Cross of Truth to bear,  
And love and reverent fear to make  
Our daily lives a prayer."—WHITTIER.

AROUT the year 1643 two young children, a boy and a girl, might often be seen in a little " coach " drawn by a footman through

" The walks of Lincoln's Inn,  
Under the elms,"

then, and long afterwards, an aristocratic neighbourhood. The little Gulielma (who afterwards became

the wife of William Penn) was the daughter of Lady Springett, the widow of Sir William Springett, who died in the Parliament service. Her chosen playfellow, Tom Ellwood, was the youngest child of Walter Ellwood, Esq., of Crowell, near Thame. He was a delicate little fellow, very small for his age, and sadly missed the country air of Crowell, whence his father removed at the breaking out of the civil war, not thinking it safe to remain in his country-house, as some of the garrisons of the king were near it.

The Ellwoods made London their home until after the surrender of the city of Oxford. On their return to the country, Thomas Ellwood's older brother was sent to the free school at Thame, whither Tom also went as soon as his age would allow. He was remarkably quick in mastering his lessons, but being a busy little lad, very active and full of fun, he so often heedlessly broke some of the rigid rules of the school, that he came in for a large share of the birch. Yet, notwithstanding this, he writes with regret of his early removal from school. His father, who had accepted the office of Justice of the Peace at the time of the Commonwealth, was led into much increase of expenditure; and having also entered his eldest son as a fellow-commoner at Merton College, Oxford, thought it needful to retrench in some other direction, and therefore brought back his little son from Thame, where he had made good progress in Latin, and had

begun to learn Greek. It could not be expected, however, that a boy of his age would study alone without any supervision, and young Tom's books were soon thrown aside, whilst he gave his time to such recreations as were within his reach. He of course forgot quickly much of what he had learned, and warily avoided reading aloud, even in an English book, lest he should come across a Latin word and mispronounce it. But of mother wit he had no lack, and was a favourite with his young companions, in the choice of whom he was very particular. He was always a welcome visitor at Thame Park, the residence of his godfather, Lord Wenman, whose wife was nearly related to Thomas Ellwood's mother. The out-of-doors country life no doubt had its advantages, and when about fifteen the dwarfish lad began to shoot up, and did not leave off growing until he had reached a medium size and stature.

He one day accompanied his father to the Petty Sessions at Watlington. As they drew near the town, the coachman took a short cut through a cornfield where there was a pathway wide enough for carriage-wheels; whereupon a ploughman bade the driver draw up, and roundly abused the gentlemen for going over the corn. The elder Ellwood quietly told the man that if any damage were done, full satisfaction should be given him if he would call at the inn to which they were going. It was not until late in the evening that the father and



son set out on their homeward way, and the night was dark. They told the coachman to take the high-road, but after a while the carriage came to a sudden halt, the horses' bridles being seized by two strong men, one of whom was their acquaintance of the morning. Alighting from the carriage, Walter Ellwood, followed by his son, walked up to the men, and demanded the reason for this assault. "You are upon the corn," was the false reply, "and we have made up our minds that you shall go no farther, but we'll make you go back again." Walter Ellwood remonstrated with them, and warned them of what might be the consequence of such conduct, which hint only called forth their derision. Then he ordered them to give up the great clubs they were carrying; but they laughed, and said, "We did not bring them hither for *that* end!" Meanwhile young Ellwood was standing at his father's elbow, his youthful blood boiling with indignation, eagerly waiting for a word that should warrant him to enter the lists. When the order came, "Tom, disarm them," he went right up to the man who was nearest to him, and, laying hold of his staff, said, "Sirrah, deliver your weapon." This was the last thing, however, the assailant contemplated; he raised his club, which was massive enough to have felled an ox, but, before he could strike a blow, his nimble combatant drew out his rapier without a moment's delay, and the glitter of the bright blade so startled

the countryman, that he fled as fast as possible, followed by his comrade. So rapid was their running, or so skilful their hiding, that Thomas Ellwood's pursuit was unavailing. The coachman quietly kept his seat, with the plea that he dared not leave his horses, possessing more prudence and possibly less courage than his young master, who soon found that he had lost his way, and that it was not easy to regain it in the dark; indeed he could only do so by calling to his father and the driver, and following the guidance of their voices. At that time his mind was quite untroubled with the thought that he had narrowly escaped staining his hands with blood; but in after years, whenever he passed the spot or memory brought back the event, he would thank God for the unseen intervention of His restraining hand. It was about this time that Thomas Ellwood lost his eldest brother; and not long afterwards his mother, of whom he writes in high terms.

Thomas Ellwood was one day asked by his father to accompany him on a visit to Isaac Penington, who had married Lady Springett, to whom allusion has already been made. The news had reached Crowell that they had come to live on their own estate at Chalfont, in Buckinghamshire, which was some fifteen miles distant. To the astonishment of the Ellwoods, they found on their arrival that their hosts had become Friends. As other guests were present, the father had no opportunity for conversing

with Isaac Penington on the change he had made. Meanwhile his son's mind was occupied with the desire for the companionship of his old friend Guli-elma, whom at length he found gathering flowers in the garden, accompanied by her maid. They had sometimes met since childhood, when the Peningtons were in country lodgings. The lovely girl received him courteously; but when he talked to her in his accustomed style, there was something in her deportment, young as she was, that made him apologise for intruding into her private walks, and withdraw. He says they went home "not greatly satisfied with our journey, nor knowing what in particular to find fault with."

Walter Ellwood wished to learn more about the Quakers, and after a while on a winter's day he set out with his daughters and son (who was now twenty years of age) for The Grange, the Peningtons' residence at Chalfont. The visitors were warmly welcomed, and remained for four days, lengthening their stay in order to attend a Friends' meeting held in the spacious hall of a farmhouse, which had once been a gentleman's seat. Edward Burrough was there; he was then only five-and-twenty, and had already for some years been a minister of the glad tidings of salvation through Christ. Young Ellwood sat near him, and eagerly drank in the Gospel truths, which satisfied his intellect and warmed his heart as no preaching had ever done before. As the Ellwoods

left The Grange on the following day Edward Burrough went with them to the gate, and spoke a few parting words to each. "And surely," writes Thomas Ellwood, "that which he said to me, or rather the spirit in which he spoke it, took such fast hold on me, that I felt sadness and trouble come over me, though I did not distinctly understand what I was troubled for."

Soon afterwards, having learnt from his father's man that there was to be a meeting at High Wycombe, he went there on horseback, calling his greyhound to follow, so that he might seem to be going out coursing. The town being reached, he ordered the ostler to take care of his dog, and repaired to the private house where the meeting was to be held; as he took the first empty seat he could find, just inside the door, he thought that the sword which he wore attracted the attention of some of the little company. Presently a minister arose, and what he said was just suited to Thomas Ellwood's state of mind, and sealed on his soul the impression which had been already made. He writes that although he had not fallen into the gross sins of the world, its spirit had ruled his life. "I found," he says, "that all sin (even that which had the fairest or finest show, as well as that which was more coarse and foul) brought guilt, and with and for guilt condemnation on the soul that sinned. Now also did I receive a new law, the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which wrought.

in me against evil . . . so that I could not any longer go on in my former ways."

Thomas Ellwood's father one day desired him to rise early the next morning and go to Oxford, where the Quarter Sessions were to be held, in order to deliver the recognisances he had taken, and to ascertain what were the most important pleas before the magistrates. It was with a heavy heart Thomas Ellwood lay down that night, pondering how he should act in the court, and conduct himself towards the acquaintances with whom, as he says, he was "wont to be jolly." Nor did Satan fail to make matters much worse by raising before him those imaginary mountains of difficulty with which he delights to dismay the young believer. But if the enemy were near, He who had redeemed him by His precious blood was nearer, and hearkened to his oft-repeated prayer that he might be kept from evil, even in the face of scorn and contempt. Soon after entering the public hall he found himself surrounded by three of his former friends—a collegian in his gown, a surgeon of the city, and a country gentleman. Following the fashion of the day, they took off their hats and bowed, saying, "Your humble servant, sir." They were astonished when they found that he did not offer them a like greeting; but soon the young surgeon, slapping him on the shoulder, said, "What, Tom, a Quaker?" "Yes, a Quaker," was his ready response, and as this

confession passed his lips, joy sprang up in his soul.

As we shall hear more of Thomas Ellwood and his hat, we may perhaps more clearly understand the state of the case by reading the following remarks of Hepworth Dickson: "Lifting or not lifting of the hat was very far from being all. It was a sign, and one of many signs. . . . In the reign of Charles II. men wore their hats in house or church, as well as in the streets and parks. Men sat at meals in felt, and listened to a play in felt. 'I got a strange cold in my head,' wrote Pepys, 'by flinging off my hat at dinner.' Every one ate covered. A preacher mounted to the pulpit in his hat; the audience wore their hats, and only doffed them at the name of God. Hat-lifting, therefore, was a sign of a depraved and foreign fashion recently brought into England. All sober men put on their hats, while wits and foplings carried them in their hands."

On the day after his return from High Wycombe Thomas Ellwood rode off early to Isaac Penington's, whose house was only fifteen miles distant, but so bad were the roads that he did not reach The Grange until the afternoon, when he had the pleasure of finding that on that day of the week a meeting was regularly held there.

In company with Isaac Penington he went to a monthly meeting at High Wycombe on the following day. It was held in a large room in a private

house, and Edward Burrough's ministry, he says, came forth amongst them "in life and power, and the assembly was covered therewith." To his own heart it came as just the message of which he stood in need, and the right course for him to take seemed more clearly defined than before. He yearned to yield a loyal allegiance to his newly-found Saviour, but the fear of his father's displeasure weighed heavily on him. When he reached home, his father was out, but after a while he arrived in his carriage, and when he noticed the change in the young man's deportment, was very angry, and only saying, "I shall talk with you, sir, another time," hastened into his parlour.

Meanwhile Thomas Ellwood pondered the plan of going on the morrow to Oxford in order to attend the Friends' meeting which would be held there on the following day, and he gave orders that a horse which he had borrowed should be ready early. Before starting he asked his sister to go to their father's chamber to tell him that he was intending to go to Oxford, and to inquire whether he could do anything for him there. The message she brought back was that his father would come and speak to him, which he did before completing his toilet. When he saw that his son did not remove his hat at his approach, he was so overcome by passion that he struck him with both fists and pulled off his hat, and then bade the servant ride back the borrowed

horse. The man, who was much attached to his young master, tried to make an excuse and to cause a little delay; but in vain—he had to ride off immediately, even before taking his breakfast.

Thomas Ellwood now set off on foot, and his father, supposing that he had gone to his own room, did not ask for him until the evening, when, as he sat by the fire, he bade his daughter call her brother down. - “It may be,” he said, “he will sit there else in a sullen fit till he has caught cold.” “Alas! sir,” was her reply, “he is not in his chamber, nor in the house neither; he put on his shoes and went out on foot, and I have not seen him since. And indeed, sir,” she ventured to add, “I don’t wonder at his going, considering how you used him.” Walter Ellwood was distressed at hearing this, and so overcome with the fear that his son might run into danger, and perhaps die in gaol, that he cried out weeping, “Oh! my son, my son; I shall never see him any more.”

Before leaving, Thomas Ellwood had confided to his sister whither he was bound. The next morning she sent a man to tell him of the state of things at home, and on the following day he returned. Notwithstanding the alarm Walter Ellwood had felt about his son, the greeting he gave him (after snatching off his hat) consisted of blows, and the words, “Sirrah, go up to your chamber.” Hat after hat having been taken from him, he was now perforce a prisoner to



the house, where he spent much time in reading, chiefly in the Bible, and in waiting on the Lord.

His father continued his unkind treatment, which came to a climax one evening after he had summoned his servants to prayers, as was occasionally his custom. "Call in that fellow," he exclaimed, angrily, after manifesting displeasure at the tardy arrival of his domestics, and when his son entered the room he vented his passion on him. "Let them that can pray in such a spirit, for my part I cannot," said young Ellwood. Thereupon his father struck him with a cane, and so violently that the young man, fearing his skull might be broken, managed to protect his head by laying his arm on it. The man-servant tried to interfere, and Thomas Ellwood's sister exclaimed, "Indeed, sir, if you strike him any more, I will throw open the casement and cry out murder, for I am afraid you will kill my brother!" This threat availed, and Thomas Ellwood went to his room feeling more grieved for his father than for himself. "The rest of the winter," he says, "I spent in a lonesome, solitary life, having none to converse with, none to unbosom myself unto, none to seek counsel of, none to seek relief from but the Lord alone, who yet was more than all."

The solace of congenial companionship was at length afforded him. Isaac Penington and his wife paid a visit to Walter Ellwood's, and before leaving, Mary Penington said that, since Thomas's company

was "so little acceptable" to him, she hoped he would grant him leave to spend some time with them, and, taking advantage of their old acquaintance, overruled all his objections with womanly tact. As Thomas Ellwood was about to step into the carriage, his sister reminded their father, in a low tone, that he was without a hat, and leave was given her to fetch one; but he started without a penny in his pocket, for his father had taken all his possessions from him. And this, although he was amongst kind friends, once brought him into an awkward predicament.

He had been at Reading, and on a Sunday morning set off to return to Isaac Penington's, where the meeting was to be held; but on reaching Maidenhead he was stopped by the watchman for riding on that day, and told, moreover, that he must go with him to the constable. The constable in his turn decided that he must go before the warden, and, himself leading the way, bade the watchman bring on the stranger. "I looked somewhat big," remarks Thomas Ellwood, "having a good gelding under me and a good riding-coat on my back, both which my friend, Isaac Penington, had kindly accommodated me with for the journey;" and to this loan he modestly attributes the fact that the warden took him to be "somebody!" As it was the hour for church, he delayed examining him, but gave orders that he should be taken to an inn. The word "inn" reminded the traveller that he had no money for paying his

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expenses, and he frankly said so. "No money!" exclaimed the warden in astonishment; "how can that be? You don't look like a man that has no money!" Thomas Ellwood could only reply that, however he looked, such was the fact. "I wonder," said the warden, "what art you have got that you can travel without money; you can do more, I assure you, than I can. But if you have no money, you have a good horse under you, and we can distrain him for the charge." "But," said Thomas Ellwood, "the horse is not mine." "But you have a good coat on your back," was the rejoinder, "and *that*, I hope, is your own." On learning that both horse and coat were borrowed, the warden lifted his hands in surprise, and exclaimed, "Bless me! I never met such a man as you are before. What, were you set out by the parish?" Thomas Ellwood, not knowing what might lie before him, earnestly prayed for wisdom as he was led off to the "Greyhound" inn.

When the afternoon arrived, he was again summoned before the warden, who told him that the penalty he had incurred was a fine or the stocks, and asked him which he would choose. "I shall not choose either," was the traveller's reply; and he added that even if he had money he could not pay a fine, as that would be equivalent to acknowledging himself an offender; as for the stocks, he was in the warden's power to do what it should please the Lord to suffer him. The warden then

said, that as he was young, he would not exercise the severity of the law, and discharged him. "But I desire my horse may be discharged too," said Thomas Ellwood, "else I shall not know how to go." "Ay, ay," was the answer, "you shall have your horse." He rode away with a joyful heart, silently praising God for having kept him from anything that might tend to bring reproach on his Saviour's cause.

The visit at Isaac Penington's was a time of much blessing to him. On his return home his sisters did what lay in their power to soften his father's displeasure, and his path became a much smoother one. "As my spirit was kept in due subjection to the Divine power," he writes, "I grew into a nearer acquaintance with the Lord; . . . so that I not only sometimes heard His voice, but could distinguish His voice from the voice of the enemy."

It was at this time that his mind was heavily burdened by a deep sense of the sinfulness of "those priests," as he says, "of divers denominations, who made a trade of preaching, and who, themselves hating the light because their deeds were evil, laboured as much as in them lay to keep their hearers in darkness." As he felt "the zeal of the Lord flame in his breast" on this subject, he believed it to be the will of his Father in heaven that he should publish a pamphlet containing a warning to "priests" of this description. He dreaded this

duty, but the Lord granted His help in its performance and then filled his heart with peace.

Thomas Ellwood had become acquainted with a friend, Thomas Loe, of Oxford, who was a minister, and one day wrote to tell him that a room could be easily obtained for the holding of a meeting if Thomas Loe thought it well to come, for he much desired that his neighbours should have an opportunity of "hearing the glad tidings of salvation livingly and powerfully preached." Whilst in daily expectation of an affirmative answer to his letter, a party of horse came up one morning to his father's gate. The commander of the company told Thomas Ellwood he must go with him, and when asked where his warrant was, laid his hand on his sword; he had been directed, he said, to bring him forthwith before the Deputy-Lieutenants, and bade him order a horse to be got ready. As they rode along, he asked young Ellwood to show him the houses of some other gentlemen whom he had been requested to take up; but Ellwood told him that he should scorn to be an informer against his neighbours. When arrived at Weston, the Deputy-Lieutenants asked him many questions about the insurrection of the frantic Fifth Monarchy men. He gave his answers without hesitation, and then, to his astonishment, heard that they had a very serious charge against him, and "under his own hand" too. It was a dangerous thing, they said, to write letters

appointing meetings in such troublesome times. The letter to Thomas Loe had been seized and carried to the Lord Lieutenant of the county, just after Thomas Loe and some other Friends had been taken from a meeting by his orders and imprisoned in Oxford Castle.

The Deputy-Lieutenants now tendered Thomas Ellwood the oath of allegiance. He told them that he owed allegiance to the king, and if he could take any oath at all, he would take that; but his Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, had bidden him to "swear not at all." Very fervent was the secret cry of his soul meanwhile that his Saviour would keep him faithful to Him. Presently he was told that if he would but take the oath, the affair of the letter should be passed over. "I know that you cannot really have anything against me," Thomas Ellwood said; "my refusing the oath is merely a matter of conscience. I dare not take any oath whatever, if it were to save my life." On hearing these uncompromising words they signed a mittimus committing him a prisoner to Oxford.

In the rapidly-waning light of a cold winter afternoon he was sent there, under the care of a trooper, who had such complete confidence in him that he rode on without troubling himself with any doubts that his charge would follow. After riding about a mile from Weston, Thomas Ellwood overtook his father's man, and found that he had followed him on

foot to Weston, and had waited near the stables until some of the servants told him that his young master was to go to Oxford; he had then run in that direction, having made up his mind that he would not leave Thomas Ellwood until he had learnt what his fate would be. Thomas Ellwood told the faithful fellow he had better return home, but he begged so hard for leave to remain that Ellwood had not the heart to refuse it, but made it a condition that he should share his horse. Mounted behind his master, the man now propounded the very unquakerly scheme he had been devising, and which was no other than to use his stout cudgel in fighting the trooper and thus effect his master's rescue; but Thomas Ellwood speedily threw cold water on this plan.

It was growing late when the trio arrived at Oxford. To the prisoner's surprise, the trooper, who had received private instructions, instead of taking him to the castle, drew up at a linen-draper's shop in the High Street, and delivered the mittimus and a letter from the Deputy-Lieutenants to its master, who gave Thomas Ellwood a courteous welcome. The loyal servant, finding his young master better lodged than he had anticipated, was now willing to bid him good-bye. Ellwood's host, Mr. Galloway, was a city marshal and a man of considerable repute in that city; but, comfortable as were his quarters, Ellwood would gladly have exchanged them for the prison with its privations for the sake of the com-

panionship of Thomas Loe and other friends. The news soon spread through the city that Marshal Galloway had a Quaker prisoner under his care; and when Thomas Loe heard of his young friend's trial, he wrote him a loving letter of heavenly cheer. "My soul blessed the Lord for His love and tender goodness to me in moving His servant to write," says Thomas Ellwood. "Oh, dear heart," writes his friend towards the close of his letter, "let us give up all freely into the will of God, that God may be glorified by us, and we comforted together in the Lord Jesus." Then he tells him that there were more than forty friends in bonds there, "suffering innocently for the testimony of a good conscience. . . . We are all well," he adds, "and the blessing and presence of God is with us." Surely they knew a freedom unknown to many who walk at will under the sunlit heavens, and a light shone in the prison such as is too often unsought in the luxurious home, or amidst the over-eager following of the things of this life.\*

\* "I went," says a modern writer, "to see Lancaster not long ago, and the great old castle. . . . We went down from the roof and visited the dungeons. When we came to one of them, our guide said; 'This is where George Fox was confined.' All of a sudden I felt a kind of fear. I felt I was on holy ground; the walls were holy, and it was holy dimness that crept around. If George Fox lay days and nights here, then Somebody had been here far greater and grander than he. George was a man who spoke much with Jesus, who saw and heard Jesus as it is given to few either to hear or see. If George Fox lay here in the dark, it was not dark for him. Jesus had been here. These windowless walls had shone



Next came, to Thomas Ellwood's joy, a letter from Isaac Penington, "which caused me," he writes, "to double and redouble my thankful acknowledgment to the Lord." It is dated from Aylesbury gaol. After alluding to God's great goodness in calling his young friend out of worldliness, and giving him an inheritance amongst His people, Isaac Penington adds, "And let it not be a light thing in thine eyes that He now accounts thee worthy to suffer among His chosen lambs."

Although much refreshed by these letters, Ellwood greatly longed for intercourse face to face with the Friends who were in captivity near him. Kind as the marshal-keeper was, he was very slow to grant him leave to go out, the more so because he was aware that young Ellwood was pretty well known in the city. Yet once he allowed him to visit his friends in the Castle on certain conditions—that he should go out after dark, should conceal himself in his cloak, and should return early; with which stipulations he of course scrupulously complied. The time he had with his friends was too short not to be made the most of, and much of it was spent in

once as the sun shines not on the sunniest hills. For George Fox there had been a light in that cell such as never was upon sea or land. He was one of the men who were much in prison, and who were haunted—absolutely haunted—with glory, and filled with the Light of men. We are freer to-day because of George's prisons, and his prisons were more bright and open to him than most men's liberty, because of the visitation of Jesus to his soul."—P. T. FORSTER, M. *azine*, July 1886.

unitedly drawing near to God ; and then they told one another of the outward trials which had befallen them. Much too brief did the hour seem as, with embraces, he bade his brethren farewell.

About this time Walter Ellwood, who had been absent from home when his son was arrested, made an appeal to the justices, and obtained his release.

At the time of the coronation of Charles II. the father and daughters went to London, a visit which led to the breaking up of the family circle, for both the young ladies married, and their father never returned to settle at Crowell.

Thomas Ellwood walked one day to Aylesbury gaol, where Isaac Penington and more than sixty other Friends were imprisoned. He found them in a wretched tumble-down room, once used for a malt-house, from which there would not have been the slightest difficulty in escaping ; but the gaoler's confidence in them was unbounded.

After Isaac Penington's liberation, Thomas Ellwood, who was now about twenty-one, often went to the meeting held at his house at Chalfont. One morning this meeting had hardly begun when the prancing of horses gave warning that tumult was at hand. No one stirred from his seat, however, except a worthy old Independent or Baptist, who had come to Chalfont for the sake of some religious conversation with Isaac Penington. Seeing a private door which led from the parlour into the garden, he

sprang over the bench which stood before him, and quickly making his escape, hid himself in a safe nook in the shrubbery. Hardly had he done so when a company of soldiers, headed by one Matthew Archdale, of Wycombe, arrived. His behaviour was very different from that of most of the officers sent on like errands, for he allowed no violence and spoke civilly. He said he had received orders to take the men who were present before a magistrate, but added that he should not arrest all. He chose Isaac Penington and his brother, George Whitehead, Thomas Ellwood, and four or five other Friends. The magistrate (Sir William Boyer, of Denham) received them courteously, and of course recognised Isaac Penington as a gentleman from the neighbourhood. But on asking the names of those whom he did not know personally, he was astonished to learn that George Whitehead came from Westmoreland, William Penington from London, Thomas Ellwood from Oxfordshire, and another Friend from Essex. "I am sorry that your case looks ill," he said; "for how can it be imagined that so many could jump altogether, at one time and place, from such remote quarters, if not by combination and appointment?" They told him that not one of them had known of the coming of the others, and therefore he might "impute it to chance, or, if he pleased, to Providence." They reminded him that as their meetings were public, beir doors open to all comers of

any denomination, it would be mere madness to plot under such circumstances. Sir William said he was unwilling to take the utmost rigour of the law, he would therefore discharge Mr. Penington himself, because he was but at home in his own house; Mr. Penington, of London, because he came but to visit his brother; the grocer, of Colchester, because he came to bear Mr. Penington, of London, company; the others he would send away—for the present, at least—because, being his neighbours, he could summon them whenever he would. “But as for you,” he added, addressing George Whitehead and Thomas Ellwood, “I can see no business you had there, and therefore I intend to hold you to it, either to give bail or go to gaol.” When they told him they could not give bail, he said it was too late in the day to send them to Aylesbury, so he would dismiss them till the morrow. But he did not pursue the matter any further.

When one day Thomas Ellwood was on his return from a visit to Chalfont, as he was walking through Beaconsfield, he was taken up by the watchman, who said he had received orders to arrest all rogues, vagabonds, and sturdy beggars; but when Thomas Ellwood asked him for *which* of these he took him, he vouchsafed no answer, and soon consigned him to the care of a constable. The latter informed Thomas Ellwood in the evening that some of the chief people in the town had assembled to decide what should be

done with him, and added that he would have to appear before them. But first he took him to a dirty little hovel adjoining the market-place—the home of an old dame who went by the name of Mother Grime—where the night-watchmen used to warm themselves.

After Thomas Ellwood had been asked a few questions, a consultation was held as to what should be done with him for the night. One suggested that he should go to a public-house; others, who were for practising economy when it did not interfere with their own comfort, remarked that it would save expense if he spent the night in walking the streets under the care of the watchmen. This idea took exceedingly until some one ventured to ask whether the law would bear them out in the execution of it. "I heard all their debates, but let them alone," says Thomas Ellwood, "and kept my mind to the Lord." One of the company now asked the common-sense question, "Does any one know who this young man is and whither he is going?" On hearing this, "Mother Grime" could no longer hold her peace, but exclaimed that she knew Mr. Ellwood of Crowell well, for she had once lived in service with his grandfather; and the account she gave of his father at once caused the abandonment of the scheme of sending him to spend the night in the streets. He was well lodged at the house of a constable, who told him that on the following day

there was to be "a Visitation, or spiritual court," held at Amersham, whither he must appear. Fervent were Thomas Ellwood's prayers as he arose in the morning that, whatever might betide, he might be kept steadfast in his loyalty to his Lord. Whilst thus engaged he was called downstairs, where he found another constable, who also threatened him with the "spiritual court." But it would seem that their real desire was to get rid of a prisoner against whom they had no charge to make but the fact that he was a Friend. They proposed that he should slip out at the back-door, but found that he had no notion of accepting such a dismissal as this; he told them that as he had come in at the front door, so he would go out at it, and having paid the woman of the house for his supper and lodging, he took his departure.

It was soon after this that Thomas Ellwood became ill of small-pox in his solitary home at Crowell. His father had previously sent him directions that he should discharge the servants; so he was living in almost hermit-like style, except that a woman came every morning to set the house in order. As soon as his kind friends at Chalfont heard of his illness, they sent him a nurse, and afterwards visited him, bringing Edward Burrough with them. Thomas Ellwood writes, "It pleased the Lord to deal favourably with me both inwardly and outwardly; for His supporting presence was with me, which kept my spirit near unto Him." In his convalescence he

turned for occupation to his father's library, and so diligently read the works of Augustine, &c. (badly printed in black letter), that he injured his sight.

As his intercourse with Friends had made him aware of the deficiencies in his education, he spent most of his leisure in study, but longed for some assistance. He now spoke of this to Isaac Penington, whose acquaintance, Dr. Paget, was a friend of Milton, whom Thomas Ellwood describes as "a gentleman of great note for learning throughout the learned world for the accurate pieces he had written." John Milton was now leading a very quiet life in London, and in consequence of the loss of his sight employed a reader, usually some young gentleman, who thus found an opportunity for his own intellectual improvement. Dr. Paget now arranged that this privilege should fall to young Ellwood's lot, who therefore committed the care of the house at Crowell to a tenant of his father, and took lodgings as near as he conveniently could to Milton's house in Jermyn Street. Thither he went of an afternoon, and sitting by the great man in his dining-room, read Latin works to him. Milton took great pains to help him on in his studies, and thus six weeks passed rapidly away. "But, alas!" he writes, "I had fixed my studies in a wrong place. London and I could never agree for health." He had been spending his solitary forenoons poring over his books, forgetting that

there is even a greater need for air and exercise in city than in country life. He now went to the house of a friend, a physician at Wycombe, so ill and prostrated that but little hope was entertained of his recovery. But his was not a disposition to be easily daunted, and as soon as his strength revived he returned to his pleasant London work. Milton gave a warm reception to his intelligent and studious pupil.

But scarcely a week had passed away before Thomas Ellwood found his studies yet more abruptly broken in on. One morning he was attending the Friends' meeting at Aldersgate, when the worshippers were suddenly disturbed by the clamorous entrance of a party of City soldiers, headed by a Major Rosewell, who, bidding them present their muskets at the Friends, gave leave of departure to any who were not Quakers. "Will you not shift for yourself and try to get out?" asked a young acquaintance of Thomas Ellwood, who had come to the meeting out of curiosity. Thomas Ellwood answered that he could by no means renounce his profession, but he rejoiced to see the young gentleman get safely out. When the Friends were brought into the street, they were surrounded by other soldiers armed with pikes. As there had been some suspicion of slaughter, Thomas Ellwood asked the Major if he intended a massacre. He seemed taken aback by the question from so young a man, but quickly recovering himself, said, "No, but I



intend to have you all hanged by the wholesome laws of the land." The Major leading the way, the soldiers walking on each side of the prisoners, he took them through the streets to Old Bridewell prison, and when the wicket was opened, seizing Thomas Ellwood by the shoulders, he thrust him in with the words, "Seeing you are so busy, you shall be the first man to go into Bridewell." The porter then bade him ascend the stairs on the other side of the court, and go on as far as he could. The first room he entered looked like a court of justice, the next was hung with black, and was furnished only with a whipping-post in the middle of it; passing through this, he came to a spacious and beautiful apartment, the royal dining-room in the days when Bridewell was a palace. He was soon followed by his fellow-prisoners, only one of whom he knew by sight.

In the violent persecution of that year, 1662, most of the men who were Friends were made prisoners and confined in various prisons in London. The Society of Friends arranged that some of their members should have the oversight of these prisons, and Bridewell was visited by "two honest, grave, discreet and motherly women, whose names were Anne Merrick and Anne Travers." The weather was cold, and they came with hot meat and smoking broth, and bade all to come and partake who were not otherwise provided for. Although the smell of the warm savoury viands was very inviting to a

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st had been a light one, ering the matter, decided offer. His pocket now or had he any further. others he thought might meal was soon disposed was but a small estate to t with," he writes, "yet at it, nor had I a mur- w I ought to be content, d I was so. I had lived I had always found the hen in the evening the ing that bread, butter, ggs might be had for ; up a pennyworth of made dinner and supper sfied I was with it," he then have gone to bed

prisoners had bedding ; but Thomas Ellwood, or him, improvised a bed on the floor, which he ed one end of its frame a quiet, easy mind, he r a few days a released k. Before his tenpence Isaac Penington called

and placed twenty shillings in his hand; then came two pounds from Mary Penington, followed by one from his father. "This is the Lord's doing," was the language of his heart. He now felt that his chief need was occupation; his companions had set themselves to work at their tailoring and other trades, but were afraid to entrust their materials to an unskilled hand. Nothing daunted, he got some simple work from a Cheapside hosier, and spent many pleasant hours cross-legged amongst his tailor fellow-prisoners.

Although committed by no civil authority, many weeks passed away ere the prisoners were brought before the sessions; and then, as they could not conscientiously take the oath of allegiance, they were all committed to Newgate, and placed in the crowded common gaol, where they found many Friends. At night, all, whether Friends or felons, lodged in one room; it was round, and in the centre there was a great wooden pillar which supported the chapel above. To this they fastened one end of their hammocks, securing the other end to the wall; they could only find space enough by placing them in three tiers, and beneath these beds were laid on the floor. The impure and exhausted air caused illness, and one prisoner died; the corpse was placed in a coffin and carried to the porter's lodge to await the coming of the coroner. On his arrival, the turnkeys, according to their custom, went into the street, and laid hands on every

man that passed by until they had collected a sufficient number for the inquest; remonstrance availed nothing, as the turnkeys did not hesitate to resort to force if other means failed.

On this day they espied an elderly man, a sedate citizen, who was hurrying along on some business so urgent that he besought them not to compel him to serve. To these entreaties they gave no heed, little thinking what would follow. When the inquest began, this old gentleman was appointed foreman. "To what purpose do you show me a dead body *here*?" he asked. "How know we but that the incommodiousness of the place wherein he was kept may have occasioned his death?" This suggestion much annoyed the officials, who began to banter the foreman; but he was not going to be trifled with. "Come, come," he said, "though you have made a fool of me in bringing me hither, ye shall not find me a child; now I am here. I understand my place and your duty. I require you to conduct me and my brethren to the place where the man died. Refuse it at your peril." It was evening; Thomas Ellwood and his companions had arranged their hammocks and were beginning to undress, when they heard the unusual sound of many feet on the stairs, and then a turnkey opened the door and called out, "Hold, hold; do not undress yourselves; here's the coroner's inquest coming to see you." As the foreman looked in, he lifted his hand and exclaimed, "Lord bless

me, what a sight is here ! I did not think there had been so much cruelty in the hearts of Englishmen, to use Englishmen in this manner. We may wonder that they are not all dead ! Well, if it please God to spare my life till to-morrow, I will find means to let the king know how his subjects are dealt with." The next day a sheriff arrived, and ordered that all the Bridewell prisoners should return thither, where they would have better air. He committed them to the care of the Bridewell porter, who told them that as they knew their way he would not stay to accompany them.

When ready to depart, they placed their bundles on their shoulders, and walked two and two to Old Bridewell. This procession attracted notice, and they were asked, by shopkeepers at their doors and by passers-by, who they were and whither bound ? " We are prisoners," said they, " going from Newgate to Bridewell." " What, without a keeper ? " was the next question. " No," they answered, " for our word, which we have given, is our keeper."

Thomas Ellwood was now able to get the solitude he sometimes longed for. " My spirit was more than ordinarily exercised," he writes ; " on the one hand the sense of the exceeding love and goodness of the Lord in His gracious and tender dealings with me did deeply affect my heart, and caused me to break forth in a song of thanksgiving and praise ; and on the other hand a sense of the profaneness, debaucheries, cruelties, and other horrid impieties of

the age lay as a pressing weight on my spirit." When the court next sat at the Old Bailey, the prisoners were called to the bar only to be discharged.

Soon afterwards Thomas Ellwood was asked to become temporary tutor to Isaac Penington's children, an arrangement which answered so well, however, that he retained the post until his marriage, seven years later. Scarcely was he installed in this employment when his heart was overwhelmed with the sorrowful tidings of the death of Edward Burrough in Newgate ; a close, cruel confinement had cut off his life at the age of twenty-eight, "to the unutterable grief," writes his friend, "of very many, and unspeakable loss of the Church of Christ in general."

About this time, at Milton's desire, Thomas Ellwood chose a country-house for him at Giles Chalfont, and hoped to help him when the family arrived there, but was prevented from doing so by a month's imprisonment in Aylesbury gaol. When liberated, he paid an early visit to his former master, who lent him a MS. to read at his leisure, no other than "*Paradise Lost*." They afterwards had some pleasant conversation about it, in the course of which Thomas Ellwood asked him what he had to say about *Paradise found*. Some time afterwards, when calling on Milton in his London home, the great poet said, as he showed him "*Paradise Regained*," "This is owing to you, for you put it into my head by the question you put me at Chalfont."

In the spring of the following year, 1665, Thomas Ellwood was imprisoned by order of Justice Benett. It was characteristic of this magistrate that, unhindered by the dignity of his office, he had furnished himself, when on his way to the house where the meeting was held, with a stout stick from a stack, and concealing it beneath his cloak, rushed in amongst the little company, to whom Morgan Watkins, a Welsh Friend, was preaching. With his uplifted stick he cried out "Make way there!" and struck an elderly woman who did not move fast enough out of his way. Six of the Friends he committed to Aylesbury gaol, where it was said the plague had broken out. A lady who was present, not a Friend, begged him to reconsider this decision, asking him how he would answer the cry of their blood if they died in the infected prison. He then agreed to send them to the Wycombe House of Correction, where they were kept close prisoners for three months. Here, with his wise love of occupation, Thomas Ellwood asked Morgan Watkins to teach him to do coarse netting. "It was a good time," he says, "the Lord being graciously pleased to visit my soul with the refreshing dews of His divine life, whereby my spirit was more and more quickened to Him, and truth gained ground in me over the temptations and snares of the enemy, which frequently raised in my heart thanksgiving and praise. At one time more especially, the sense I had of the prosperity of truth and the

spreading thereof, filling my heart with abundant joy, made my cup overflow." Thus did God sustain His servant in faith and hope amidst circumstances calculated to discourage and depress. As he himself writes, for he was given to versifying—

"Some men are free while they in prison lie ;  
Others, who ne'er saw prison, captives die."

In 1669 Thomas Ellwood married a friend named Mary Ellis, who became an esteemed minister. Their home was at Hunger Hill, in the parish of Aversham, Buckinghamshire. But scant details are left us of the remaining forty-three years of Thomas Ellwood's life. He was an industrious author, and we are told that he was particularly "qualified by spiritual wisdom and great strength and depth of judgment" to defend the truths he held dear. In 1690 he copied and prepared for the press the journal of George Fox, which was printed in folio in the following year. His principal work is "The Sacred History of the Old and New Testaments." One of his friends, after remarking that he did not often speak as a minister, alludes to the extreme value of his remarks in meetings for transacting the affairs of the Church, which seemed to be "a talent given by the Lord."

Thomas Ellwood was much respected by his neighbours, and his doors were open to the poor and sick. "I matter not what cost I am at to do good," was a saying often on his lips. He is



described as a man of a comely aspect, of a free and generous disposition, of a courteous and affable temper, and pleasant conversation; a gentleman, a scholar, a true Christian. Early in 1713 he was taken ill with palsy, and died after a few days' illness in his seventy-fourth year. "If the Lord hath no more work for me to do," he said, "I am content, and resigned to His will; and my hearty farewell to all my brethren. . . . My spirit is filled with joy." He was interred in the Friends' burial-ground at Jordans, where the mortal remains of many a good soldier of the cross has been laid.

"I heed not those who pine for force  
A ghost of time to raise,"

yet assuredly now, as then, there is a need-be for the inspired injunction, "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong." The truth is still at war with all that is evil in the world; and, as in the outward warfare of old, the victory is to be won by "the sword of the Lord and of Gideon"—"*not two swords, but one*," which can only be wielded by that soldier who says, "Not my will, but Thine be done." "God Himself" is with such "for a captain," and theirs shall be the blessedness of sharing in the triumph of Christ as He goes forth "conquering and to conquer."

## JOHN RICHARDSON.

“Remember, O my soul ! that the Prince of Peace is thy Lord ; that He communicates His wisdom to His family, that they, living in perfect simplicity, may give no just cause of offence to any creature, but may walk as He walked.”—JOHN WOOLMAN.



## *JOHN RICHARDSON.*

“One day for HIM is long enough,  
And when HE giveth work to do,  
The bruised reed is amply tough  
To pierce the shield of error through.”

—JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

“TURN out I must and did, though I was weak, poor, and low in body, mind, pocket, and clothes; for I think I had but twelve pence in my pocket, and very ordinary clothes upon my back.” Thus John Richardson describes his condition as, at the age of eighteen, in 1684, he left the house of his step-father, a zealous religious professor, who could not brook his son's love for Friends and their meetings, although he acknowledged that no one could exceed John in faithful diligence.

With a sad heart the poor lad had taken leave of his mother and little brothers, whilst many tears were shed. And now he found himself an outcast on the great common, where he had had many a lonely walk before, but never one like this. He tried to comfort himself by thinking of Abraham; but then he remembered that the patriarch was “called out,” whereas he was forced out.

His *own* father, a Yorkshire shepherd, had been religiously inclined from childhood, and when engaged in his solitary employment, passed much time in reading the Bible, and seeking after God in prayer. He grew weary of the preaching he heard, and longed and waited for the coming of a more excellent dispensation, which seemed already to be dawning in his own heart. Although George Fox visited East Yorkshire about that time, William Richardson did not meet with him; but when, soon afterwards, William Dewsbury came to the neighbourhood, he was "exceeding glad in hearing him declare the way to find . . . a Saviour *near*, who had been held forth by men to be at a distance." William Richardson became a Friend, and a faithful minister, patiently suffering imprisonment and the spoiling of his goods for the sake of Christ.

At the time of his death, his son John was a wild, thoughtless boy, thirteen years of age, about whom he was very anxious. Yet even then the Holy Spirit was visiting that young heart, and after a while the lad longed to possess that peace of mind to which he was a stranger; at first vainly hoping to find it without giving up his heart to the Lord who had laid down His life for him. He became more and more earnest in his quest, however, and at the same time more and more disconsolate. He sought help from various professors of religion, but to no purpose; for they failed to direct him to

Christ, and apparently did not themselves experience that deliverance from the power of sin which he was now sincerely seeking for. Then, as his father had done before him, he "breathed after the Lord" in fields and lonely places, beseeching that He would show him His salvation. Nor were his prayers unanswered; yet at first such a sense of his sinfulness was given him, that he thought the state of no one on the face of the whole earth could be like his. God's judgments were upon him, but it was in order that he might learn righteousness. The Lord whom he sought came to His temple to sit as a refiner of silver. "This was the day of my baptism," he says, "into the love of God and true faith in His beloved Son." He now felt that things of this world merely were but of little worth; and as he fixed his faith more fully on his Redeemer, he found that His grace was quite enough for him amidst trial and temptation; and he learnt that the Holy Spirit of God chooses—

"Before all temples the upright heart and pure."

Young Richardson now went to the meetings of Friends as often as he could, although his time must have been much occupied on the little farm; for his mother had been left with five children, of whom he was the eldest son, and with but scanty means for their maintenance. Indeed, he found it rather hard work to earn his own living, help his mother, and pay for the schooling of his young brothers. After a year

or two he felt that God was calling him to the ministry of the Gospel; he was but seventeen, and his unwillingness to give heed to this heavenly summons brought him into exceeding sorrow, and the comforting consciousness of his loving Saviour's presence was withdrawn until he began to yield obedience to Him by sometimes speaking in the meetings he attended.

By thrift and industry the family got on comfortably, until his mother married a well-to-do gentleman, a union which at once brought the conscientious youth into trouble. "Is it now come to this?" he asked himself; "I must either displease my earthly or my heavenly father." But although the year which he passed in his stepfather's house was one of no ordinary trial, grace was given in his time of need.

John Richardson was astonished at the wonderful amount of work he managed to get through, even beyond what he had strength for, so wishful was he to win his father's love by any lawful means. On Sunday mornings the latter would often send him a mile or two into the fields, or over the common, to look at the cattle and sheep, with the hope of making him too weary to go to the distant meeting. Of this treatment he never complained, but it was a great grief to his mother, for he afterwards had to walk very fast, or run, in order to reach the meeting; and this he did in such an exhausted and overheated state that some Friends could not forbear weeping,

knowing the difficulties through which he had pressed in his longing to worship God with them.

But soon the time arrived when his father told him that he should no longer dwell in his house. In vain the poor youth pleaded that he would still do the best he was capable of for him by night or day; the unrelenting reply was, "No, you shall not stay in my house." His mother, who had heard this conversation, was so distressed, that he now left his father in order to try to comfort her. "If I am but faithful," he said, "the Lord, I believe, will take care of me, that I shall not want." Then he gently reminded her that as she had entered into the marriage covenant, she should in everything act as a wife ought to do, leaving her son and all else in order to cleave to her husband. He also asked her never to send him any gift without his father's knowledge, although their own little property was in the hands of the latter.

At this crisis John Richardson thought it best to tell two worthy Friends of Ellington monthly meeting how it fared with him, in case any false rumours should arise as to the cause of his suddenly leaving home. He accordingly went to Sebastian Elletthorp and Benjamin Padley, the latter a young and earnest minister, who zealously laboured for the advancement of Christ's kingdom.\*

\* Benjamin Padley died in 1687, some three years after this date. During his brief last illness, when many relatives and neighbours



These two Friends called on the stepfather and asked him if he had anything against his son with regard to the work he set him about, and he was obliged to own that no one could exceed John in trustworthiness and industry. The only thing he could bring against him was his attendance of meetings. The visitors could not forbear expressing their pity for the youth, and suggested that he should have a little more liberty, seeing he was so willing to work. But this gave offence, and the good men were bidden to go home and mind their own business. They turned away much troubled about their young friend, and only wondering that he had been able to live with his stepfather so long. In the midst of his sorrow John Richardson was, he says, "mightily comforted when Sebastian Elletthorp told him that his father had nothing against him 'save that concerning the law of his God.'"

In vain did he beg his father to allow him house-room until he could find a situation, although in truth he was hardly fit for one, being so wasted that most of his acquaintance thought he was in a consumption. Full as his heart was on the day he left his home, he took leave of his family with calmness ;

came to see him, he said : "It is not for any outward thing we travel abroad ; not any man's silver or gold that we seek, but it is the gaining of souls. We have suffered the loss of our goods, scourgings, and imprisonments, so that it may appear that it hath not been the benefit of any man's goods or estate that hath been in our eye, but performing the will of our Lord."

but when out on the open common, after looking carefully around him, to be sure that no one was near who might see his tears or hear his cries, in an agony of sorrow he poured out his heart before God, "who," as he says, "spoke to me and comforted me." The words which brought much consolation to his heart were:—"First seek the kingdom of heaven and the righteousness thereof, and all those things thou standest in need of shall be given unto thee." With a childlike confidence, he now asked God to show him whither he should go, and the Lord, he says, "opened my way and showed me the house I should go to and abide in for a time. I said, '*Good is the word of the Lord!*'" He now went to the house of a Friend at South Cliff, and bound himself to him to learn the trade of a weaver. They became much attached to each other, and the master used to say that he was blessed for the sake of his apprentice.

It was John Richardson's earnest desire to fulfil the ministry which he had received, but his path was beset with difficulties, which nothing but his steadfast faith in God could have carried him through. The common report being that he had rich parents, there were few who knew how exceedingly straitened his means were, and lameness now prevented him from walking to meetings at a distance. The hardships to which he had been exposed, and the overstrain on his youthful strength, had led to the

formation of a violent abscess in the leg; but when his kind master knew that he wanted to visit any meetings, he would bid him take his horse and not hasten himself. His most formidable hindrance, therefore, must have been the stammering, which he had strenuously, but unsuccessfully, striven to overcome. Yet, notwithstanding all obstacles, he felt that there was but one path for him to walk in—that in which Christ went before him; for ere this he must have learned that He who guides the planets in their courses cannot fail to lead aright each soul that submissively seeks His guidance. He fully and trustfully surrendered himself to his Saviour, and the lameness, which medical skill could not relieve, was taken away as he pressed through all discouragements to Christ for the true healing of body and soul. Then his faith was strengthened to seek for the cure of his stammering also, and ability was given him to speak quite plainly, not only when preaching, but also in the conversation of every day.

Still sometimes, when travelling as a minister, he found himself almost unable to speak or swallow from the effect of a severe sore throat. One day when suffering thus, whilst sitting in a meeting at Hawkeshead, he felt anxious and cast down; for he believed that it was at the Lord's bidding that he had entered on this service, and now the power of speech was almost taken from him. But he knew where to cast his burden, and longed to welcome

God's will in this and every other trial. "I had not," he says, "been long brought into this devoted and resigned state, to be and do what the Lord would have me, but, oh! I felt the virtue of Christ as a sweet and living spring, by which I was healed."

Meanwhile John Richardson was learning blessed lessons in the school of Christ concerning the completeness of His redemption. "I saw," he writes, "into things relating to God and His heavenly kingdom, and into His work and way of bringing man out of the fall and alienation to Himself again, and into a heavenly state in Christ, as man yields true obedience unto the leadings and operations of His blessed grace and Holy Spirit."\* Nor did John Richardson fail to see the necessity for the Christian's absolute dependence upon God, instead of leaning upon self. And thus hungering and thirsting after righteousness, forsaking all that hindered a

\* "There is little doubt that in the times when George Fox lived, as indeed in all times, . . . whilst there was much talk made about justification by faith, in too many cases those who talked so glibly of these things remained in the daily conduct of their lives much as they had ever been. This no doubt arose out of, or was connected with, the *exclusive* way in which justification by faith was preached; . . . it was made a new salver to the conscience, by representing the death of Christ as removing from us the condemnation due as the wages of sin, whilst it gave no power to overcome and eradicate it from the soul. . . . Thus, as Luther had preached the forgiveness of sins by faith in the blood of Christ, so George Fox preached holiness of life; but no pharisaical or self-righteous holiness. *Christ was the Author of it through faith in His living power in the heart.*"—Brown's "*Man's Restoration.*"

close following of Christ, he realised more and more the fulfilment of our Lord's promise to the man who, loyally loving Him, cannot but keep His words—"My Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."

During the eight years that followed his twentieth birthday, he went on the Lord's service four times through most of the English counties, and twice visited the greater part of Wales. When at home he worked as hard as his delicate constitution would allow of. He delighted in reading the Holy Scriptures, and his retentive memory enabled him to make good use of them; whilst he was also fully alive to the necessity of "waiting," as he says, "for the help of the Holy Spirit, the root and pure spring of the right and living ministry which reaches the heart."

When about the age of twenty-eight, finding the time had come when he could rightly give closer attention to business, he opened a small shop for mending clocks and watches. He had at intervals followed this occupation for several years, as his strength proved insufficient for weaving. He had a strong inclination to settle at Whitby, but felt sure that God was directing him to Bridlington. So to Bridlington he went, and soon the Lord revived His work in the meeting there, especially amongst the young Friends, many of whom, as the next few years passed by, found that their Saviour was calling them to speak in His name, so that it became almost a

proverb thereabouts that Bridlington was a school of the prophets.

John Richardson married a young Friend of the age of twenty-two, an orphan residing with her uncle at Bridlington. From childhood she had loved her Saviour and sought His presence; she longed that others might share with her the blessedness of communion with God, and delighted in joining with them in meetings for His worship. About three years after her marriage she began to speak as a minister, but was soon summoned to her heavenly home. She died at the age of twenty-seven. "He is come," were her last words, "He is come whom my soul loves; and my soul rejoices in God my Saviour, and my spirit magnifies Him." She left three little children, the youngest a baby a month old.

"This innocent young child," as its father calls it, followed its mother to heaven in less than a year; and then it was that John Richardson thought the right time was come for him to visit the Friends on the other side of the Atlantic; for he had long believed that America was a field in which he would be called to labour.

He made a comfortable arrangement for his two children, being willing to leave them, his country and his friends, as well as to encounter hardships and perils, for Christ's sake. Yet he passed through many trials of faith, for his means were very limited.

He knew he should leave no debt behind him, for he had often said that rather than religion should suffer on that score, he would live on bread and water; but the question was whether he had enough to cover the needful expenses of his children and himself. And he wished to leave this on record, believing that in future years others would read their own experience in his. According to his wont, he placed the matter in God's hands, telling Him that He knew His servant's readiness to do His will, and also of the difficulty that stood in the way. All doubts vanished as the answer came to his heart, "Go, and be faithful, and I will bless thee every way." Overwhelmed by the condescending love of his Father in heaven, the cry of his soul was, "Good is the word of the Lord! Thou hast not failed me in any of my great straits and trials to this day. I have great cause to trust in Thee; renowned be Thy most excellent name, now and for ever."

It was in the summer of 1700, and when about the age of thirty-three, that, in company with some other Friends, he went on board a ship in the Thames with the intention of taking the passage in her. But regarding a long voyage as a dangerous undertaking, and desiring in all things to be led by Him who numbers the very hairs of our head, he sought for guidance from above, and then told his companions that he could not sail in that vessel.

They exchanged it for another, and afterwards heard that the ship which they had deserted had been lost off the Channel Isles.

The voyage of the *Arundel* was sixteen weeks in duration, and many were the storms she encountered before her arrival in Maryland. Although weak in body and low in spirits when he set foot in the New World, he does not fail to tell us of the help which God granted him. When in New England, his mind was deeply impressed with a conviction, which he sometimes spoke of in the meetings he was visiting, that the Lord in His own good time would "gather a great people" there to the effectual knowledge of Christ, and that the blood of the Friends who had died as martyrs at Boston would be "a fruitful seed" of the Church.

One day a gentleman who held a prominent position came to a meeting at which Richardson was present, with the intention of publicly opposing his teaching, followed by several of his acquaintance who wished to hear the argument. To their disappointment, however, their friend was quite silent. "Why do you not speak?" they said to him at length. "The man," he answered, "has opened the thing so as I never heard it before, and I have nothing to say." Then bursting into tears, he took a seat near the door. When John Richardson again visited that part of New England, this gentleman asked him as a



favour to hold a meeting at his house, and "a heavenly meeting" it was.

When sailing to Rhode Island, Richardson and some other Friends were obliged by the stormy weather to put into a creek, and then thought it would be wisest to finish their journey on horseback. When endeavouring to hire some horses, they told the owners that they would gladly pay what was fair, but hoped that they should not be imposed on because they were strangers. Whereupon an old man came up to them and said, "What people are you, if you are not Quakers?" John Richardson told him they were sometimes called so derisively, but they did not much mind names. "There was a man here lately," so the talkative old man went on, "that said he was a Quaker, and borrowed a horse, and when he was gone some miles from this place, offered to sell it. I know not but you are such." To this broad hint John Richardson naïvely replied that this was just a proof that Friends were an honest people, for a cheat would cover himself with the best name he could think of! The old man now helped to get them well mounted, but first courteously took him to his own house, and offered him refreshment.

At Salem John Richardson saw one of the finest orchards he had met with in the course of his travels, the property of Thomas Maulham, who had been a great sufferer at the time of the cruel persecution of

Friends. After he had been deprived of nearly all he possessed, his persecutors brought their axes and hewed down all the apple trees in his large orchard, leaving the stumps about two feet from the ground; but the trees grew again wonderfully, and bore abundant fruit.

After a time a Virginian Friend, James Bates, became John Richardson's companion, and was with him when he visited the island of Nantucket, to which he was strongly attracted. A worthy Friend, who bore the name of Peleg Hocum, offered to take them there in his sloop, but night overtaking them before they reached the right landing-place, they were in some danger. Leaving the sloop at anchor, they entered a small canoe, and got to the shore, as they supposed, of Nantucket. But, dark as it was, they soon discovered that the beach of sand and rubbish on which they found themselves was the margin of a little island scarcely larger than a rock. They almost feared that it might be completely covered at high-water, and would gladly have returned to the sloop if they could have succeeded in finding her. At last the morning broke, and by nine or ten o'clock they had safely landed at Nantucket.

To the surprise of the quiet, weary little party, as they wended their way up the hill from the shore, they saw that their arrival was causing consternation to the inhabitants, a number of whom were looking out to sea. A rumour had reached them that the

vessel which brought the strangers was a French ship loaded with arms and filled with men, who were come to invade the little island, which measures but fifteen miles by eleven. When told of this report, Richardson held out his arms and said, "I know not of any worse arms than these! We are come to visit you in the love of God, if you will let us have some meetings amongst you." To these words a kindly answer was returned. The Friends now bent their steps towards the house of one Nathaniel Starbuck, and on reaching it they told him they had heard that he was a seeking, religious man, and it was chiefly such they were come to visit. Whilst Nathaniel Starbuck was giving the strangers a warm welcome, his mother, Mary Starbuck, entered the room. No sooner had she done so than the thought arose in Richardson's heart, "To this woman is the everlasting love of God." She stood high in the estimation of the islanders, who so valued her judgment that they consulted her on all matters of any moment. And it is evident that she possessed no small amount of mental ability.

It was decided that a meeting should be held that evening at her husband's house, and then John Richardson, who felt in need of rest after his sleepless night on the rocky island, lay down for a little while. But as he could not sleep, he went out into the woods until the hour for holding the meeting was at hand. Deep as was the concern which he

experienced with regard to it, he did not fail to observe, as he entered the spacious room, that the arrangements for the convenient seating of a large company had been made with a woman's skilful care. He could suggest no improvement, and had only to ask for something to stand on, as he did not like to place his feet on the handsome chair which had been set for him.

Whilst James Bates was preaching, a Nonconformist minister interrupted by casting some reflections on him and on those who had countenanced the Friends by coming to hear them. But the Lord was manifestly reigning in that assembly, and His power was irresistible. John Richardson found that the message he had to deliver was from the text, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." "Nay," he said, "the natural and unregenerate man cannot so much as *see* the heavenly and spiritual kingdom of Christ, which stands not only in power, but also in righteousness, joy, and peace in the Holy Ghost. . . . To be born again signified to be quickened and raised into a spiritual and new life, . . . and the life which such live is through faith in the Son of God. And to have all this and much more wrought in us and know nothing of it would be unaccountable."

Although Mary Starbuck had long been a professor of religion, she had never fully realised Christ's power to save from sin. And for a considerable time she

mentally resisted the heart-searching truth which this commissioned servant of the Lord was constrained to utter. To one who had so fairly earned the respect of all around her, it naturally seemed a hard matter to humble herself and become as a little child. At first she tried to hide her emotion, but as the preacher continued speaking in this strain, the depths of her soul were stirred and she wept aloud. "And then," he says, "the universal cry, and brokenness of heart, and tears were wonderful! From that time I do not remember one word that I spoke. . . . I have since thought of John being in the spirit on the Lord's day. If it had been a state to be continued in, I am of the mind I should not have been sensible of weariness, neither of hunger nor pain. . . . There are none that can know the white stone and new name but they that have it." When the ministers desired to break up the meeting, they could not for some time succeed in doing so, for the whole company sat weeping until the very floor was wet with their tears. John Richardson told them that he was feeling faint, but still they did not stir. "My life was not dear to me," he says, "in comparison of the worth of the souls of the children of men."

After a little while Mary Starbuck arose and said, "All that we have been building, and all that ever we have done, is all pulled down this day." As soon as she had sufficiently recovered herself, she remem-

bered the exhausted state of the young preacher, and said to him, "Dear child, what shall I do for you?" He bade her bring him something warm to drink, but not brandy. "A great convincement there was that day," he says. Nathaniel Starbuck and his mother were both called by God to the work of the ministry; and from the diary of another Friend we learn that some thirty-five years later more than 1000 people were in the habit of attending the Friends' meeting on that small island.

John Richardson left Nantucket with fervent prayers that God would prosper His blessed work there, and soon afterwards arrived at Lynn. The Friends' monthly meeting was about to be held, which he was told would be attended by George Keith, a clergyman who had once been a Friend. This news gave him a good deal of anxiety, from the expectation that the meeting would be much disturbed. George Keith was a talented and highly-educated Scotsman, who for some twenty-eight years had been in full unity with the Society of Friends, and was esteemed by them as a minister and author. But, as the chronicler Gough says, "affecting to be wise beyond what is written or revealed, he was shaken from his steadfastness in the faith." After his emigration to Pennsylvania, the Friends there found it needful to disown him, and he set up a separate meeting in opposition to them, and did all that lay in his power to vilify his former associates.

In 1694 he returned to England, and six years later was ordained a vicar by the Bishop of London, and soon afterwards sent to New England as a missionary.

On the evening preceding the Friends' monthly meeting at Lynn, Keith came with a large number of people to the house where Richardson was staying, and whilst vehemently abusing Friends, threatened that he would next day convict them "of errors, heresies, damnable doctrines and blasphemies. Look to answer for yourselves [he went on], for if you do not, the auditory must conclude what I advance against you is true." And then with insulting reference to John Richardson, he exclaimed, "Is here a man that is a scholar?" Keith found, however, that although the Yorkshire preacher was not a man of letters, he was a minister of God, the baptizing power of whose Spirit was manifested in the meeting on the following day, as with much clearness and unction John Richardson addressed the congregation, beginning with the words, "In the way that you call heresy do we worship the God of our fathers, believing all things that are written concerning Jesus Christ."

After an allusion to his attendance of a large yearly meeting where William Penn and other able ministers were present, John Richardson writes:—

"How comfortable, how easy and pleasant, are the exhortations that are given forth in the spirit, love, and

life of Christ! Yea, the very company and conversation of such as are preserved in the life becomes a sweet savour of Divine life to the living; there is edification, comfort, and consolation, a strengthening and building up one of another in the most precious faith. So that I find the truly quickened soul taketh great delight to resort to, and, as much as may be, converse with the awakened and truly quickened souls who take up the cross of Christ daily and follow Him.\* . . . Come, thou that lovest the light, and bringest thy deeds to the light; . . . put off thine own righteousness, which it may be thy breast hath been too much possessed with, and put on Christ's righteousness as a breastplate. . . . Wait upon Him that hath power, that thy feet may be shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace."

One of the meetings of which Richardson tells us was attended by Lord and Lady Baltimore and their retinue, who came to it with William Penn. It so happened that they did not arrive until the meeting was partly over, and Lady Baltimore told William Penn afterwards that she was much disappointed. "I don't want to hear you, and such as you," she said, "for you are a scholar and a wise man, and I don't question but you can preach; I want to hear some of your mechanics, husbandmen, shoemakers, and such-like rustics." "Some of these are rather the best preachers we have," was Penn's reply. John

\* "The cross will be divinely transformed in the arms of him who knows how to hold it in a loving grasp."—*Besson*.



Richardson describes her as "a notable, wise, and withal a courteously-carriaged woman."

In the course of his visit to America John Richardson's mind was much burdened one day whilst sitting in a meeting with the belief that some one in the company had been guilty of a flagrant sin; and he thought it his duty to make an allusion to this, though he would fain have held his peace. "Under a sense," he said, "of some gross wickedness committed by some person not far from me hath my spirit been borne down, which wickedness will in a short time break forth, to the dishonour of truth and grief of Friends." On revisiting this place, he was told of events which proved that he had been following God's guidance in making this remark. A similar incident is recorded in connection with his work in Pennsylvania.

It was in this State also that Richardson had some intercourse with the Indians. One day when walking in a wood, he noticed some of their wigwams, and constrained by the love of Christ to address them, he sought for an interpreter. He spoke in a very simple way, but as the words were translated to them, they wept so freely that the tears ran down their naked bodies; and they said to the interpreter, "All that he says is good, and except *The Great Man* had sent him he could not have told us these things." John Richardson bade the interpreter ask them how they knew that his words were good. Smiting their breasts they answered, "The Good Man here tells us that

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what he says is all good." \* They were very loving in their manner towards the white stranger.

After bidding farewell to the Indians, he went to the house of a justice of the peace who had lately become a Friend, having been deeply impressed by the ministry of Thomas Story. This gentleman's wife had no liking for the Friends, and on John Richardson's arrival she exclaimed, "What! more deceivers come?" But, to the joy of her husband, John Richardson's visit of two or three days was a time of wonderful blessing to her, and she parted from him with tears, thanking God for sending him.

During his extensive travels his life was sometimes in great peril. In company with a few other Friends he one day set sail from the east side of the wide river Choptank, in order to visit a meeting on the bank of the river Perquimus, which flows into the Choptank on the west. Their small boat proved to be unseaworthy, the wind was against them, and before the voyage of more than ten miles could be accomplished, they were surrounded by the darkness of a stormy

\* "George Fox's faith in the light of Christ assured him that there would be a response to the truth when preached in the power of the Spirit, whether it was presented to Turk, Jew, infidel, or savage. Knowing that the love of God reaches to all mankind, and that the scope of the offering of the Saviour is universal, he urged upon his brethren everywhere to preach and teach. '*If you are true Christians,*' he tells Friends in America, in 1679, '*you must preach the Gospel to Indians, Blacks, and all others. Christ commands it.*'"—Stanley Pumphrey.

night. The sea broke violently into the boat, and the Friend on whom he had chiefly relied for help said that he could steer no longer. "What by the extreme darkness," John Richardson says, "the roughness of the waves, boisterousness of the wind, and hard rain, I, unwell as I was, was obliged to undertake the steering of the boat, and not without some conflicts of mind, not having any certainty from any outward rule what way we went. Having no fire, and the boat being open, we could not have any light to see our compass; but my faith was in the Lord that He would bring us to shore. I kept the boat as near to the wind as she could sail, and told my poor, sick, and helpless company I believed that we should not perish; but the like imminent danger I think I was never in before upon any water. But renowned over all be the great name of the Lord for ever; we got into the mouth of our desired river Perquimus as though we had seen it in the day, or steered by a compass."

On landing, they made a large fire under the cliff, which Richardson kept alive during that frosty night. At midnight the moon arose, and whilst his over-wearied companions slept heavily, forgetful of his own fatigue, he watched over them, drawing them nearer to the fire as it got low, and farther from it as it revived. "Morning being come," he continues, "we got into our cold, icy boat, and sailed away towards the meeting. . . . A heavenly and sweet

meeting it was, so that we thought we had a good reward for all our trouble."

Not long afterwards he was crossing a ferry two miles wide in company with eight others, some horses also being in the boat. When they were about half way across the river, one fine spirited horse rose upon his hind-feet and threw himself half over the gunnel of the boat; the other horses became restless, and the boat began to take water. There was not a moment to be lost, and John Richardson took the young men who were on board by the shoulder and flung them down on the neck of the prostrate horse to prevent him from suddenly rising, hastily explaining to them the reason for this unceremonious act. Next he had to deal with the ferryman, who, coolly remarking that they would all be drowned, but for his part he could swim, was on the point of deserting them. Richardson suggested that when the boat began to sink it would be soon enough for him to take this course. Yielding to this remonstrance, the man took the oars again and rowed them safely to the farther shore. With characteristic simplicity Richardson adds:—"In our imminent danger I looked over my tender friends (for so they appeared to me), and thought in my heart what a pity it would be if all these were drowned! yet *the thought of my own drowning never entered my mind* until I was got over the river." Again we find him writing, "My life has often appeared not dear to me in compari-

son of the saving of the souls of the children of men."

One day when travelling in Virginia his bewildered guides completely lost the way; he told them he would see what he could do, and by the aid of a little compass of his own making, and, as he says, of "that inward sense that did persuade" him that they were to the westward of the road, they got into the right route again, and the rejoicing guides told him that he was fitter to be guide in a wilderness country than they.

Towards the end of 1702 John Richardson and his friend James Bates set sail in a sloop for Barbadoes, putting into the Bermudas on their way. Soon after landing there they were summoned before the Governor. This caused Richardson alarm, for it is evident that the courage he often exhibited was not physical; but soon he could say, "Lord, Thou knowest that I have not only offered up my liberty, but life also, for Thy name and Gospel's sake;" and then all fear fled from him. "Being thus resigned," he adds, "I felt the love of God, and a measure of that life was manifested in which I had dominion over men, bonds, and over death and the power of darkness." Yet he was still feeling so ill from the effects of the voyage that it was an effort to ascend the stairs to the Governor's room. The Governor, observing this, stretched out his hand as Richardson neared the top of the staircase, and "like a tender

father," as the latter says, drew the stranger towards him; then leading him to a large window, he stood and looked at him, saying, "I believe I know what you are, and your business, too." "I spoke to him in the love of God," John Richardson adds, "and it was with me to say to him, 'The Lord of heaven and earth bless thee and all thine.'" After some interesting conversation, as the Friends took their leave, the Governor pressed them to accept the loan of two of his horses.

A rumour of the arrival of the ministers having reached the ears of the aged Judge of the island, he sent in haste for them, saying he could not sleep until they came. "Whatever is the matter with him we know not," said the two men who bore his message. It was evening when the travellers reached his residence, and his wife met them in the passage, and conducted them to him. The Judge arose to greet them, candle in hand, saying, "What a mercy is this, that the Lord should send men from I know not where to visit me!" Then the old man folded him in his arms and kissed him, and they wept together as John Richardson said, "The Lord of heaven and earth bless thee!" Before starting early on the following morning the travellers had an interview with the Judge by his bedside, which Richardson thus describes:—

"We sat down and waited upon the Lord, who was pleased in His love and by His power to break in upon

us, and also opened my mouth in His gift of grace and supplication; ardent and fervent cries went up unto the Lord of heaven and earth that He would send health and salvation to the Judge, and also to his family, and to all people far and near, that all everywhere might repent, and come to the knowledge of the truth and be saved. The Judge wept aloud, and a mighty visitation it was to his family, and especially to himself and tender wife."

The latter, with her page, accompanied the Friends to the meetings which they held on the island. When William Penn was told of these visits to the Governor and Judge, he wept, and said that he had not heard anything of the kind for many years that had so much affected him.

Before John Richardson and his friend landed in Barbadoes, the vessel in which they were sailing was thought to be in imminent danger from the approach of a ship which had the appearance of a large Turkish frigate. "We shall certainly be taken!" the captain exclaimed, "binding his words," as Richardson delicately puts it, "with some asseverations." Being convinced that God would deliver them, he answered, "No, we shall not, unless by our mismanagement." But the captain, although a courageous man, had lost all heart, and believed that the Saleeman was on the point of firing a broadside on them. He had treated John Richardson with marked courtesy during the voyage, and now, showing that reliance which men are ready to put in one who has practical faith in God,

he with his crew followed Richardson's directions with childlike docility; and, after working for some hours as hard as men could work, they out-sailed the frigate. Meanwhile Richardson felt, as he had for some days previously, that a fever was coming on, and when they safely landed, he was so ill that it was thought he would not recover. A day or two later, as he sat in a meeting which he had reached with great difficulty, his faith was tried by the consideration that, after all the perils he had passed through in order to reach that island, there was no probability of his being able to work for his Lord there; and then his thoughts crossed the ocean to the little children who would be both fatherless and motherless if he were now called to rest from his labours. But we must let him tell his own story:—

“During my sitting under much weakness of body yet quiet in mind, the living virtue or heavenly power of Christ sprung up in my inward man like healing and suppling oil, which so effectually helped me every way that I could say feelingly and experimentally, ‘Miracles are not ceased.’ For I was raised beyond my own expectation, and all others who knew my weak state, to give testimony to the glorious coming and manifestation of Christ in power, spirit, life, light, and grace.”

When the captain of the vessel took leave of him, he wept like a child, and said that he had never loved a man so well before. “I find,” writes Richardson, “as we live and walk in truth, there is an inward



witness which God hath placed in the hearts of men *which is reachable.*"

In the early part of the summer of 1703, and when about the age of thirty-six, he returned to England. And now that he would no longer be engaged every day in direct religious work, he longed to be kept close to God. He writes: "I was under a thoughtfulness how to walk, that inasmuch as there was something of holiness unto the Lord engraven upon my heart, I might not lose the savour, relish, and sensation of heavenly things. Now in this watchful frame of mind I have found preservation."

Seven years after the loss of his first wife, John Richardson married a young Friend named Anne Robinson; but after a most happy union of some five years, she was taken from the home her presence had so much blessed to a yet higher and holier service. She was a minister, and fully sympathised with her husband in his work for Christ. In reference to his frequent absence from home she said that she cheerfully gave him up to serve the Lord, whilst her heart went with him, and shared his sorrows and his joys, partaking of the spoil. Her husband says he never heard an unbecoming word from her, let the provocation be what it might, and as her strength faded away, she was, he says, "much swallowed up in the luminous presence of her Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

In 1718, when a minister named John Dodgson

was visiting the Yorkshire meetings, John Richardson accompanied him to some of them. One day they came to a river which was much swollen by recent rain and snow; their guide, who was well mounted, crossed in safety, but when John Richardson reached the middle of the fording-place, the current swept the horse on which he was riding off its feet, and as it fell on its side he found himself dismounted, and carried down the stream with violent force until he was driven against a little foot-bridge, then some two feet below the water, where John Dodgson, at the hazard of his own life, rescued him. In a state of unconsciousness Richardson was taken to Scarborough, and his friends had little or no hope of his recovery, but on the following day he attended and took part in a monthly meeting.

In 1722 he visited Ireland, a service which had long rested on his mind, and for which the right time seemed then to have arrived, but his children were so ill of fever and ague that they were at times scarcely conscious. He earnestly besought the Lord to show him whether or not he ought to leave them, and he writes, "It sprang in my heart lovingly, 'Leave them, and I will take care of them.' I said, 'Thou the Lord hast never failed me; do what seemeth good in Thy eye with them!' I looked then no more behind me. . . . This is a liberty which many are strangers unto; it is wrought by the finger of God." On his return he found his children recovered.

John Richardson in 1731 set out on his second visit to America, where he again laboured for between two and three years. It is with a brief account of this journey that his journal ends, but his life was prolonged until 1753, when he died, in the eighty-seventh year of his age, leaving many seals to his ministry. In addition to travelling several times through most of the English counties, he once visited Scotland, his faithful labours proving to be of great service to the cause of Christ. And when, after this active life, the infirmities of old age kept him at home, it seemed to his acquaintance that he grew more and more heavenly-minded. He died near Hutton-in-the-Hole, and was buried at Kirby-Moorside.

The world has made great progress since those times, and, as one of our poets says:—

“ . . . We throw out acclamations of self-thanking, self-  
 admiring,  
 With at every mile run faster, ‘O the wondrous, wondrous  
 age!’  
 Little thinking if we work our SOULS as nobly as our iron,  
 Or if angels will commend us at the goal of pilgrimage.

Why, what *is* this patient entrance into Nature’s deep  
 resources,  
 But the child’s most gradual learning to walk upright with-  
 out bane?  
 When we drive out, from the cloud of steam, majestic  
 white horses,  
 Are we greater than the first men who led black ones by the  
 mane?

If we trd the deeps of ocean, if we struck the stars in  
rising,  
If we wrapped the globe intensely with one hot electric  
breath,  
'Twere but power within our *tether*—no new spirit-power  
comprising—  
And in life we were not greater men, nor bolder men in  
death."

Yet true as are these words, we can but allow, whilst recoiling from such "advanced" science as would fain leave God behind, that this age is deeply indebted to the toilsome research of recent decades. And this "power within our tether" *may* be made subservient to the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom, and certainly adds to the responsibilities of the soldier of Christ. But do we not need more of the "Spirit power," more of expectant faith in God, that, as we are faithful in doing His bidding, *He* will work mightily by His Holy Spirit?



## CHRISTOPHER STORY.

“When one that was in great anxiety of mind, often wavering between fear and hope, did once humbly prostrate himself in prayer and said, ‘Oh ! if I knew that I should persevere !’ he presently heard within him an answer from God, which said, ‘If thou didst know it, what wouldst thou do ? Do what thou wouldst do then, and thou shalt be safe.’ And being herewith comforted and strengthened, he committed himself wholly to the will of God, and his anxiety ceased : neither had he any mind to search curiously further what should befall him.”—THOMAS À KEMPIS.



## *CHRISTOPHER STORY.*

"It is the faith that continually closes its eyes to the weakness of the creature, and finds its joy in the sufficiency of an Almighty Saviour, that makes the soul strong and glad."—A. MURRAY.

A VILLAGE inn or public-house in Cumberland, some six miles from the Scottish border, was the birthplace of Christopher Story in the year 1648. This inn was kept by his parents, and as little Christopher was the only one of their children who lived to grow up, they took pains to give him as good an education as their surroundings would allow. The father had been in the service of Sir Philip Musgrave of Edenhall, who was a member of one of the old county families, and had often hazarded his life on behalf of the Royalist cause at the time of the Civil War. In consequence of this, when Charles II. became king, Sir Philip was appointed to important offices, and he, in his turn, rewarded his former servant.

Young Christopher sometimes accompanied his father to Edenhall; indeed Sir Philip bade the elder Story send his boy there often, in order that he might learn "breeding and good manners." He also pro-



mised that if the lad's education were well begun, he would send him to the University with his own son, and would bear his expenses whilst there. So Christopher attended school regularly until the time came when he expected to go to college with young Musgrave. But when the crisis arrived, the mother would not hear of parting with her boy, saying that if the plan were carried out, it would be a doubtful matter whether he would ever come back to settle in the country, and by-and-bye he might even sell the land.

The home of his early manhood, on the wild Scottish border, was in the midst of evil; "theft, robbery, bloodshed, with many other crying sins," so abounded, he says, "that hell, in that sense, had opened her mouth." But even in his childhood the boy had felt, to quote his own phrase, "*that* near and with" him which led him to read the Bible and seek after God; and although not acknowledging Him in all his ways, the Lord's watchful eye was over him. As he grew a little older, he says that he "was drawn forth after the vain pastimes which are in the world, as vain shooting with guns and bows." But it would seem that card-playing, at which he was very skilful, formed his chief temptation. He knew of no one who thought gaming wrong, and yet he was sure the Lord would have him give it up. For a while he tried to stifle "the still small voice," and to persuade himself that the only

change he had need to make was to abandon his favourite recreation on Sunday-evenings, a decision which only brought him temporary ease.

When he was about the age of eighteen, his parents wished that he should marry a young woman from a very respectable family. He saw the great need of having God's guidance in this matter, and in the solitude of the night his earnest prayers went up "that if it were for our good it might come to pass, and if not, it might not be so." The guidance he sought for was given, and the union was blessed of the Lord. He had little inclination now for unsteady companions, and his good wife, Bridget Story, more than fifty years later, records that he was religiously inclined from his youth.

After a while the neighbourhood was visited by a fever, which caused the death of many, and ere long Bridget Story was laid low with it. In this time of trial her husband was persuaded to consult a blind woman, who professed to be able to do wonders, and to have a knowledge of coming events. When he bade her tell him whether he would have the fever, she answered "No;" and having grown up amidst country superstitions, he was foolish enough to believe her, and to take it for granted that he should escape the disease. But it was not so, and when overtaken by illness his sorrow was great. He was distressed at the remembrance of his sins, and of the faithlessness which had led him to rest on the

word of one who pretended to have the gift of foreknowledge instead of putting his trust in God.

It was in vain that his mother tried to comfort him by comparing his life with that of others. In an agony of soul he besought God to spare his life for a little while, and remembering the declaration that "the effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much," he asked that the clergyman might be sent for. He came, but did not pray, because he had not brought a prayer-book with him. But when man failed God did not. Like many another sorrow-stricken soul, Christopher Story was to learn ere long the truth of the promise, "He delivereth the afflicted [margin] in his affliction, and openeth their ears in oppression. Even so would He have removed thee out of the strait into a broad place where there is no straitness."

"I am lost—but such Thou seekest :  
Bound—but Though canst me free :  
Dead—but Thou art Resurrection :  
Doomed—but Thou has died for me.

I have sinned ! but lo, Thy mercy  
Still out-measures all my sin ;  
Higher than its height, and deeper  
Than its hidden depths within."

Health was restored to him, and daybreak was not far off. He prayed often in secret places ; yet at first but little answer seemed to come, and he grew weary. Then he recollected how careless he had

been in church, and resolved that now he would go there with the first, and would listen attentively to every word that fell from the preacher's lips. Nevertheless the deep need of his soul was not met; "they could tell what sin was," he says, "and what would be the reward of the righteous, and what the reward of the wicked; but *how* to come out of sin, which was the thing I wanted to know, *here* they left me at a loss."

One Sunday when he reached the church, he was told that a Friend was holding a meeting at Langtown, some three miles off. So strongly did he desire to go to it, that, late though the hour was, he at once hastened thither. When he entered the room, the Friend was preaching, and Christopher Story, although not much helped by the sermon at the time, longed for some quiet conversation with him, and for this reason followed him to the inn. He found no opportunity, however, for an interview with the minister. Yet what he had heard wrought like leaven in his soul, and led him to a deeper searching of the Scriptures.

Not long afterwards another meeting of Friends was held in the neighbourhood, and Robert Barclay, the gifted author of the "Apologia," was present. Christopher Story was deeply impressed with his ministry, and his heart silently responded to the truths he heard. The words which struck him most were to the following effect: "If a man could bring

at Genesis and repeat all the Scriptures to the end of Revelation, and was not led and guided by a measure of the Spirit by whom the Scriptures were given forth, it would avail him nothing." Yet when the meeting ended, Story was at first inclined to join with a young clergyman who came forward to speak in opposition to the Friends. But Robert Barclay saw that this was no time for unsheathing the sword of his powerful logic, so he remounted his horse and continued his northward journey. Some of the other Friends entered into the discussion; but although Story saw plainly that the Friends were on the right as well as the winning side of the question, he had not the courage to own it; but he made up his mind that never again would he engage in a public disputation with the Friends. Yet we must not be too hard on him, for on his return he searched the Scriptures with a real desire to know the truth.

It was to his perplexity that he heard that another meeting was to be held about a quarter of a mile from his home. What was it best to do? At last he decided that he would go to it and take his seat near the ministers, and if he liked what they said, would ask them to be his guests, in order to have leisurely conversation with them. Meanwhile the reading of a little book, written by Francis Howgill, gave him much satisfaction, and drew his heart towards Friends. The day for the meeting having arrived, found Chris-

topher Story in a reverent frame of mind, an attentive listener to the fervent ministry of Thomas Carleton, "one of a sweet countenance," who spoke of the promised deliverance from the power of sin. As he gave earnest heed to the preacher, the young man said to himself, "I have had *that* from a child that condemned me for sin, and if it will lead me out of sin, it is what I have long wanted." But the idea of having a visit from the two Friends caused him much agitation, and as they drew near he found it hard work to keep from trembling, much as he despised himself for such weakness.

Rumour at once said that he had turned Quaker, and was entertaining the Quaker preachers; and the neighbours, glad of some variety in a long winter evening, gathered to his house until it was well-nigh full. Thomas Carleton and his companion, Thomas Langhorn, took advantage of this by proposing that a meeting should be held. After it was over, Christopher Story and some of his acquaintance, one of whom was both clerk and schoolmaster, went upstairs to write out some questions they wished to put to the ministers. When they came down, Thomas Carleton saw they were aiming at argument, and probably disappointed them by merely asking for a Bible, from which he read or pointed out passage after passage by way of reply.

On the following morning Christopher Story and his friend Christopher Taylor accompanied the mini-

sters on their onward way, and asked them many questions, to which they gave satisfactory answers; and Christopher Story says his heart was touched by "a heavenly melodious song" from Thomas Langhorn. But soon the time for parting came, and as Story and his friend took their homeward way, they said to one another, "If there be saints upon earth, those men are two of them."

The tidings of an opening for religious service in that district having spread, Friends were too wise and too watchful for the advancement of their Redeemer's kingdom to pass it by. Only two or three weeks later another minister came, and a wonderful meeting was held on a piece of ground belonging to Christopher Taylor, when many were convinced of the truths they heard. The minister spent the night at his house; and Taylor, his wife, and his brother Andrew cast in their lot with the Friends. No doubt Christopher Story did so about the same time. "We were advised," he says, "to keep a meeting to wait upon the Lord, though there were none to speak words; so we agreed to have a meeting at my house in the year 1672." They were but few in number, as they gathered with one accord in this upper chamber. "When we sat down together," writes Story, "I may say I was hard beset to keep my mind from running hither and thither after the transitory things of this world; . . . yet near the conclusion these vain thoughts vanished. . . . I was wonderfully

comforted in my spirit, and my inward man renewed in a sense of the Lord's nearness."

"But best they learn whom Thou dost teach,  
A wisdom all uncramped by rules ;  
And silence may say more than speech,  
And more than schools." \*

When a minister visited them, the meeting was usually held out of doors ; and soon persecution arose. An informer named Gilbert Atkinson did all that lay in his power to bring the Friends to ruin. But at the sessions at Carlisle, whither he had gone for the sake of carrying out his cruel schemes, he was himself arrested for debt and placed in prison, where he remained until his death. Here in his poverty and distress, during the long years of his imprisonment, he had frequent help from Friends. When the persecution ceased, many more joined the little company of worshippers, and they were often cheered by visits from ministers, whilst also having "glorious and heavenly times," when no words were spoken. One of these latter occasions is thus described by Christopher Story :—

"Being met together in the house of Christopher Taylor to wait upon the Lord, His power and presence in a wonderful manner overshadowed us ; and there was much brokenness and tenderness on the spirits of Friends, which spread over the whole meeting, except three or

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\* The Round of Service : A Metrical Liturgy.



four. I saw many in the room filled before the power of the Lord reached me ; yet the Lord in His free love and mercy was pleased to give me such a share among my brethren, that my heart is always glad when I remember that season of God's love. . . . At other times the Lord tried us with want. Here in the Lord's time we that had been under the shadow of death, to us light sprang up, and on this wise mouths were opened and tongues loosed to speak well of the Lord. And the Lord raised up planters and waterers, and made several as useful instruments for the carrying on His great work in the earth."

"O Lord, wilt Thou vouchsafe to be our Guide !  
And suffer none Thy wandering sheep to lead,  
And suffer none to fold us and to feed  
But such as by Thy living Spirit stirr'd,  
Themselves have fed upon Thy living Word ;  
But chiefly Thou, who for the sheep hast died,  
Great Shepherd, condescend to be our Guide." \*

Four or five years after becoming a Friend, Christopher Story had it in his heart to attend several meetings in the country. The first he visited was that of Wigton, where he says that sitting down "in true silence" with his mind stayed upon the Lord, some words sprang up in his heart with so much power that he had hard work to refrain from uttering them. Nevertheless he gave way to a feeling of fear and hesitation, and "reasoned until the life and power withdrew." Then came the conviction

\* The Round of Service : A Metrical Liturgy.

that he had quenched the Spirit and lost an opportunity. Sorrowful and perplexed, he hoped that in future the Lord would not lay such work upon him—

“For,” he says, “to give up to speak a word in the meetings was a thing very weighty to me, and to undergo the judgments as I had done was very heavy. On Seventh-day I went to Holm to be at their meeting on the First-day, and as I went I desired the Lord might not appear as He had done. When I came, the Lord withdrew and left me to myself. . . . I remained for several weeks under great exercise of mind, . . . and in this time the Lord often filled my soul with life and power and gave me His Word, but I through fear fell short in publishing it. And ancient, solid Friends perceived it, and spoke to me to give up. And at last being in a week-day meeting at John Ivison’s, in Jerrish Town, I was filled to that degree with life and power that I could not contain, but spake forth the words as they sprang in me. . . . And as I gave up to answer what the Lord required of me, I had abundance of peace.”

Christopher Story was now about the age of twenty-nine. A few months later we find him visiting the Friends who lived in Scotland as companion to a minister named Edmund Winn. At Aberdeen they found that most of the male Friends were in prison. They had a very open reception as they went from place to place, and Story relates that several were convinced and “divers amongst themselves livingly opened by way of testimony.”

After spending the summer at home, he was strongly inclined to visit George Fox, whom he had never seen. On his way to Swathmoor Hall he attended some meetings in Westmoreland and in the Yorkshire dales, accompanied by another minister. In the meeting at Wensleydale there was much susceptibility amongst Friends, and Christopher Story spoke to them of God's appearance to the prophet—not in the earthquake, nor in the rushing wind, but in the still, small voice. Swaledale was next visited, but, although realising the Lord's presence and power in the meetings, Christopher Story often found his mind a good deal burdened at other times. Much comfort came to him one day when a Friend who was preaching spoke of how then, as in the days of old, the priests of God might at times go mourning, not because of their own sins, but because of the sins of the people.

At Swathmoor Hall, George and Margaret Fox and their four charming daughters gave him a most kindly welcome, and George Fox bade him keep to the grace of God and he would grow.

In the spring of the following year Christopher Story started for London yearly meeting in company with John Banks. He describes it as being a good and glorious meeting to himself and "many more who were wet plentifully with the dew of heaven." Not long afterwards, whilst absent on religious service in Scotland, he writes as follows:—

"DEAR WIFE,—My love in that which is unchangeable and unalterable is unto thee and my dear children, with a true desire and breathing in my heart for your preservation and well-being every way, but especially in the blessed truth of our God. . . . Blessed and happy are all they who have received the promise and earnest of this inheritance and everlasting well-being in their own hearts. They have more cause to rejoice and be exceeding glad than they that enjoy the increase of corn, wine, and oil, or anything that is visible. . . . This I expressly write that thou take no care for me, but let thy care be to serve the Lord with all thy heart, and let Him have the chief room there, that so the Lord may delight to abide with thee, and that thou, through the daily enjoyment of His presence, mayst have cause to rejoice, and by living experience to say, 'In His presence is fulness of joy, and at His right hand are pleasures for evermore.' . . . So with my love once more to thee, my father and mother, and to my children, and friends, and relations, as though I named them one by one, for truly it would take up a deal of paper to make mention of all whom my love in the truth is dearly unto, hoping that all the honest-hearted are sensible of my love as I am of theirs. . . .

"Thy ever loving husband,

"CHRISTOPHER STORY."

In 1682 we find him again in one of the Yorkshire dales in company with Andrew Taylor, just at a time when the Friends living in those parts were suffering much from persecution.

This information had been given them at the little

town of Sedbergh, with especial mention of Dentedale, and the ministers thought it would be better to pass by the Friends there rather than add to their bonds. But in the night sleep fled from Christopher Story, and he was impressed with the belief that God had some work for him to do in the meeting of Dent. The Friends at Sedbergh told the ministers that if they went there, they might expect imprisonment, as a warrant had been signed by several magistrates for the apprehension of any strangers who were found preaching in Friends' meetings. Although Christopher Story saw where the path of duty lay for himself, he would fain have had his companion avoid the risk of attending Dentedale meeting, but Andrew Taylor would not leave him.

On a Sunday morning they went into the Dale, and told the Friends who, from the scattered cottages, were wending their way to the little meeting, that they had come in love to visit them, but were afraid lest this should cause them to be fined. "There is nothing in that," was the reply, "for we are fined already more than we have goods to pay with." It was while Andrew Taylor was preaching that several constables made their appearance, and bade him leave the meeting and follow them. But he knew he was about God's work, and gave but little heed to them. A Friend who was sitting near him persuaded them to wait awhile. They did so; then grew impatient, and, on the strength of their warrant, ordered

Andrew Taylor to go with them at once. Some Friends then promised that if they would quietly leave, the preacher should meet them at Dent Town on the following morning. To this they consented, knowing that a Friend's word was as good as his bond; and this matter being settled, the meeting went on until, as Story says, "Friends were easy and free to part, having had a good opportunity, to the satisfaction of most that were there. Several (he adds) were reached and tendered, and Ann Knowles, a young woman, was convinced, and continued an honest Friend."

The next morning, at Dentdale, the constables decided that it was needless for more than one of their number to escort Andrew Taylor to the magistrate. Christopher Story was much concerned about his fellow-labourer, fearing that imprisonment would be his lot, and that he would have to go home without him, and bear to his mother, who was not a Friend, the tidings of what had befallen him.

All that lay in his power to save his friend he did. He reminded the constable that if he merely brought Andrew Taylor before the magistrate without taking an oath about the case, it might be dismissed; whereas if he took an oath he would be making himself "an informer," and would probably have the task set him of conducting Andrew Taylor to York. The constable scorned the idea of "informing," and, leaving the Friends at the Sedbergh Inn,

he went to the magistrate and told him that he had found a stranger in the meeting, and had brought him to Sedbergh.

"Did he preach? What said he?"

"Nothing but well," answered the constable.

"However," said the magistrate, "you must take the oath."

"For the Lord's sake," replied the constable, "excuse me; for I will not swear."

The magistrate saw that he was in earnest, and after pondering the matter, bade him go his way, which he joyfully did, bearing the good news to the Friends who were awaiting him at the Sedbergh Inn.

On Christopher Story's return home he found that a fine of £20 had been inflicted on him because a meeting was held at his house. But the power of the Lord was with the Friends, and so many were added to the Church that private houses were found to be too small for their meetings; and the Friends resolved to build a meeting-house, and bought timber of a gentleman named Dacres for that purpose. But at the time of the sessions the clergy and some others petitioned the magistrates to forbid the erection of such a building, frankly saying that if the Friends put up a new chapel *they* might as well pull down the old church.

Nor was the alarm a false one, for though the parish was five miles in length, the congregation at the church was now so small as sometimes only to

number seven, including the clergyman and clerk. Indeed, three men who had successively filled the office of clerk became Friends. One of them had told the clergyman that he could not conscientiously say "Amen" to him because he saw that his life was not what it should be, and had received the reply, "Then you might say *Amend!*" The magistrates took up the matter of the proposed new meeting-house, and requested Mr. Dacres not to supply the Friends with the timber, and, justice of the peace though he was, Mr. Dacres retained the money which had been paid in advance, whilst also withholding the wood. And as the news of this prohibition soon spread, the Friends found themselves unable to get timber elsewhere.

It was about this time that the goods of Friends were often seized for the payment of "Sunday shillings," a fine inflicted for non-attendance at the parish church. Several Friends were indicted as Popish recusants, and an attempt was made to prosecute them for the amount of £20 a month; but for lack of an informer this plan seems to have failed until a man named Appleby from Yorkshire undertook that post. It was he who, during Christopher Story's absence, went to his house where a meeting was held, and gave information of it to a neighbouring magistrate, who asked if Mr. Story were at home. "Yes" was the unblushing reply. On the strength of this statement



a warrant for distress was issued, but the officers were slow to execute it whilst Story was away, and the informer becoming aware that his perjury was pretty widely known, thought it wisest to go off for a time.

In the latter part of the summer Appleby returned to his work, and giving information of another meeting at Christopher Story's house, he obtained a warrant to distrain for fines; but the constables were so moderate in their distrains, that Appleby brought one of them before the magistrate to be bound over for good behaviour. Next he had a general seizure made of Christopher Story's goods for public sale, but nobody would come to buy them except Appleby and the man he had brought with him, and they purchased the articles at their own rate. The two horses Appleby took to a distant fair and sold for half-price; the sheep gave him more trouble, for many of them were scattered about the country by some young people who enjoyed hindering him in his dastardly work.

The corn he had seized he could get no one to thresh. But he was not easily discouraged, and with a perseverance worthy of a better cause he informed the magistrate of another meeting in which Christopher Story had preached, and thus brought on him a further fine of £20. For the payment of this the constables took several cows and drove them to market; but wishing to do what they could to

prevent the sale of the cattle, they set a high price on them, and also asked some men to stand at a little distance off, and tell the story of the unjust fine to those who came to purchase.

The death of Charles II. put an end to the informer's schemes, but Christopher Story and some other Friends who were bound over to appear at the assizes were committed to prison, and remained there until James II. granted a general release: "Yet I can say," writes Christopher Story, "*all things wrought together for good to those that loved God*, for in this time of persecution, which continued near three years, we lost but one man, and several were added, and many gathered near to the Lord, and we had glorious times. I may say it was a time of heavenly love."

It must have been a new experience when the Friends, on gathering together for worship, found that the officers, instead of disturbing them, were under orders to prevent them from being molested. And now their meetings grew large; a meeting-house was a necessity, so wood was brought from Scotland. A building was erected more spacious than their present need required, but which in a few years' time was filled, and then another meeting was appointed some four miles off, for many were thirsting for spiritual teaching. "Glorious meetings," Christopher Story says, "we had, and many were much reached and convinced."

One of those who joined the Society in that neighbourhood was Aaron Atkinson, whose parents had been amongst the first to unite with the persecuted Friends. The father did not live long after doing so; of the mother we are told that "she dwelt near the Lord, and her heart was filled with love to God and His people;" and though she was left with six little children and very scanty means, she was not at all cast down, but still trusted in the Lord brightly and cheerfully. When Christopher Story visited her on her death-bed, her heavenly peace was unclouded by anxiety for the welfare of her children. They were cared for; and when, as they grew a little older, they seemed to be wandering away from the Good Shepherd, Christopher Story remembered their mother's faith, and waited, not in vain, for their return.

Aaron, whilst still a lad, going about with a linen pack, went to an evening meeting at Christopher Taylor's house, where prayer was offered by Christopher Story, that the Lord who had visited the fathers would visit the children; a prayer which was answered then and there with regard to Aaron Atkinson, who was quite broken down by the power of the Lord. Christopher Story saw this, and on the following morning sought out the youth, who long years after, when the faithful minister's earthly service had ended, thus wrote of the interview and its results:—

"This meek man of God came to where I was, and *set me on my way*, and tenderly dropped matter suitable to the condition I was then in, to my comfort and encouragement. He continued in love and was a father in Christ to me, and my spirit was subject to him as his son in the Lord."

Aaron Atkinson at once yielded himself to his Saviour's loving control and guidance, and consequently, as Christopher Story records, "he went out in the faith and greatly prevailed." His master, who was a Presbyterian, hardly knew at first what to make of the change in his young kinsman, but after a while he too became a Friend, and, as we are quaintly told, "They lived together in much love, and honoured truth in their trading, being at a word with people." Neither would they take advantage of the nearness to Scotland to sell prohibited goods. Both of them became ministers: young Aaron, speaking in a very powerful manner, reached many hearts.

The people of the district knowing him and his master well, wished to hear them preach, and many meetings were opened, and were attended by some who came a distance of three or four miles. Soon the meeting-house was found to be too small, and the Friends were asked to speak out of doors. There was a great openness amongst the people as these countrymen preached in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. Of Aaron Atkinson it is recorded

that "he was the means of bringing many not only to the acknowledgment of the truth, but to sit under the teaching of Christ our Lord, the only Shepherd and Bishop of souls." Amongst others, Aaron Atkinson's brothers and sisters became Friends.

In 1687 Christopher Story visited the Friends in Ireland. It was a time of much distress, when the colonists often had their houses broken into by the Irish, and he longed to lead those amongst whom he was labouring to the enjoyment of heavenly riches.

Two years later he visited several parts of England in company with another Friend, and found a wide open door for the Master's service. He afterwards visited Scotland with a minister named Thomas Blair; they met with very rough dealing at Glasgow, whither they had gone, as Christopher Story says, "in the pure love of God." At the house of a Friend named John Neile, whose child was ill, Christopher Story addressed a little company on the great joy of the Lord's presence with His people, and expressed his earnest desire that all his hearers might turn to the Lord and partake of God's blessings held forth to mankind through Jesus Christ.

Whilst he was speaking outcries were raised, and the house was surrounded by rough men and women, who knocked at the windows with furious exclamations of "Pull him out! pull him out!" Others there were who would have listened to the Friends if the

rabble had given them the chance of doing so. Presently a young man, who announced himself as a Presbyterian, came in company with some others to the Friends in order to drag them out into the streets, but Christopher Story had some conversation with him, and told him he hoped that day's work would not be laid to his charge, and he became quieter.

Some of the people exclaimed, "We would fain hear you preach, for we never heard Quakers." Then Christopher Story spoke to them on the necessity that our righteousness should exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees if we would enter the kingdom of heaven, supporting his argument by many Scripture passages. But such doctrine did not seem to be acceptable to a certain John Sprewell, a tobacco merchant, who, laying hands on the minister, pulled him with violence out of the house. The rabble then seized the Friends, whom they seemed ready to tear in pieces. Sprewell bade them to be civil, as he conducted the ministers to a magistrate; but his words were then, of course, powerless. The excited crowd were in no mood for courtesy, but threw dirt and stones at Story, whilst crying out, "He is a Jesuit dog! He has spoken blasphemy!"

The magistrate dismissed the case, and bade Sprewell protect the Friends from the angry mob. Yet, heedless of this charge, he coolly went on his

way, and left them to the mercy of a crowd of some hundreds of men, women, and children, who flung stones, coal, and dirt at them. Gladly did they betake themselves for a while to the shelter of the inn, where they had some refreshment, and then mounted their horses to leave the place which had given them so sorry a welcome, still followed by abuse as far as the Drag-gate. "We heartily desire," writes Christopher Story, "that the great God of heaven and earth, who always saw, and still seeth, the affliction of His people, may forgive our persecutors, and convince them of the evil of their ways."

In the following year, when again in Glasgow, he had a meeting, which was largely attended. All was quiet until towards the close, when a magistrate and some of his officers came and dispersed the company. In a letter to his wife Story says: "They offered little abuse, only mocked and scoffed us, but, it being the First-day, would not stone us!"

Many English counties, as far west as Herefordshire, and east as Kent, were visited in 1693 by Christopher Story and his friend Andrew Taylor. The former, on his next mission to Scotland, found that the people were deeply affected by the truths set before them. But again the Friends met with violent treatment, and one day, when holding an open-air meeting, were abused by lads and young men, who struck one Friend on the head until the

blood ran down. These youths had been set to work by the Presbyterian elders and others, who held responsible positions; but notwithstanding this unseemly disturbance, the meeting lasted for three hours, and several Friends took vocal part in it.

When Story next visited Scotland, he was accompanied by his wife. The season was a remarkably cold one, and the harvest late, for snow had lain on it for a month before it was reaped. Fires were made in the fields; the people looked death-stricken, and some were found dead in the highways. This was not the first season that the price of corn had been high, and the future outlook was but a gloomy one. But Bridget Story came as a messenger of comfort and cheer, and the Friends, whose hopes of better times had sunk very low, had their faith so strengthened by her words, that their sorrow was turned into rejoicing expectation, as she spoke in a meeting at Kinmuck of the conviction given her that there would be plenty of bread again. At the next yearly meeting in London, Christopher Story mentioned the distress in Scotland, and additional help was sent to the sufferers there until the time of plenty came.

It was in this year, 1699, that he wrote what he styles "An Epistle of Love and Good Advice to the People of the Lord everywhere," in which he earnestly exhorts them to abide in the Vine, into which they are already grafted, that they may



become fruitful branches.\* Farther on we find the following advice: "And now, my dear Friends, in this time of ease and outward liberty, which the Lord's faithful people greatly prize as a mercy from the Lord's bountiful hand, beware of the enemy of the soul, that lies near to draw the minds of men and women to love the world."

Of the latter part of his life Christopher Story leaves us no record, but others bear witness to his great diligence in strengthening, encouraging, and confirming the Churches, "as a tender father and faithful watchman." So well was he known as a peacemaker, that his neighbours of other denominations would call in his aid; and being himself "preserved" in the peaceable spirit of Christ, he gave it with such success as often to please both parties, which, as one of his friends remarked, "is not frequent under common management." When feebleness of body became his lot, his spirit was strong in the Lord, in whom he had so long put his trust; and his public ministry was still accompanied with heavenly power. He died, in 1720, at his home in Righed, in the seventy-second year of his age.

\* "Our new nature and holiness is first produced in Christ, and derived from Him to us, or, as it were, propagated. So that we are not at all to work together with Christ in making or producing that holy frame in us, but only to take it to ourselves, and use it in our holy practice, as made ready to our hands."—*Marshall's "Gospel Mystery of Sanctification."*

"Believe that He will do His work with power, if only thou dost not hinder Him."—*A. Murray.*

"We lived together," writes his widow, Bridget Story, "upwards of fifty years, in true love and sweet concord."

Such, in brief outline, is the life-story of one who, when he had "nothing to pay," was "frankly forgiven," and then found himself a "debtor" to his fellow-men, owing them that Gospel of which he was "not ashamed." For, like the great Apostle, he, from his own experience, knew it to be "the power of God unto salvation;" a salvation free and full, wherein to the submissive, waiting, trustful soul, "is the righteousness of God revealed *from faith to faith*,"\* until it is made "strong to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge"†

"Hath the Lord spoken unto thee apart,  
A sudden light out-flashing from His word?

That which thou hearest in the secret place,  
That which thou learnest in the silent hour,  
Is not for thee alone; ascend thy tower,  
And tell thy message in the open face  
Of men and day; e'en as a summer shower,  
Thy words shall fall with fertilising power."

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\* Rom. i. 14-17.

† Eph. iii. 18, 19 (R.V.).



## SAMUEL BOWNAS.

**"It is no new thing for Christ's disciples to meet with storms in the way of their duty, and to be sent to sea when their Master foresees a storm ; but let them not take it unkindly what He doth ; they know not now, but they shall know hereafter, that Christ designs thereby to manifest Himself with the more wonderful grace to them and for them."—MATTHEW HENRY.**

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## *SAMUEL BOWNAS.*

“ Confirm the lesson taught of old—  
Life saved for self is lost, while they  
Who lose it in His service hold  
The lease of God's eternal day.”—WHITTIER.

“ A TRADITIONAL Quaker! thou comest to meeting as thou went from it, and goest from it as thou came to it, but art no better for thy coming. What wilt thou do in the end?” Such were the words spoken in a meeting which was attended by Samuel Bownas when he was about twenty years of age, and which sank so deeply into his heart as to raise the silent prayer there, “Lord, what shall I do to help it?” This pleading seemed to be answered at once in the words, “Look unto Me, and I will help thee;” a response which came with such comfort to his soul as to make him shed tears; and yet it was a sad heart that he carried to the home of the master to whom he was apprenticed. He so much longed for another meeting that the week appeared to pass very slowly, and when the hour came, instead of spending much

of the time in sleep, as had been his wont, he says that he found "an uncommon enjoyment, my understanding being opened, and all the faculties of my mind so quick, that I seemed another man. A divine and spiritual sweetness abode with me night and day for some time."

As he yielded his young heart to that Saviour who had redeemed him to God by His blood, the Holy Spirit made the truths of the Gospel so plain to his understanding that he only wondered any could continue unconvinced of their saving power. "From that time forward I found," he says, "that what is known of true religion is revealed within, and relying on the Lord, who began thus to reveal His power in me and to let me see that I must depend on Him for strength and salvation, the Scriptures seemed to be unsealed. . . . The Lord opened my understanding to see the proper qualification and call of true ministers, that it was not external but internal, and the heart must first be sanctified before the divine anointing could be expected."

Samuel Bownas was born at Shap, in Westmoreland, in the year 1676. Before he was a month old he lost a good father, a shoemaker by trade, who had suffered much for conscience-sake, for he was a Friend, and a meeting was held in his house, at the time of severest persecution in the reign of Charles II. "He left my mother," writes Samuel Bownas, "a small patrimony to live on, of about £4 a year, to

keep herself, me, and one son more." With so scant an income, we cannot wonder that at the age of ten or twelve little Samuel should have been taken from school and set to watch sheep for the sake of the small sum which he could thus earn; and though kept closely to his work, the child probably did not regret the change. But as much could not be said of his next step in life, when, at the age of thirteen, he was apprenticed to a blacksmith, who, although his own uncle, treated him unkindly. After a time we find him the apprentice of "a very honest Friend" near Sedbergh; and it was at this period of his life, and in Brigflats meeting, that he was deeply impressed by the ministry of a woman, which was the means of showing him that hitherto he had been "a traditional Quaker," and contenting himself with a form of religion only.

As he willingly opened his heart to the gracious influence of the Holy Spirit, he began to think that the time would come when it would be right for him to speak publicly for his Lord. These thoughts passed through his mind one day as he was walking to the meeting at Brigflats, and soon after he had taken his seat in it, his mind was powerfully impressed with the belief that he ought to rise and repeat a passage of Scripture and make one or two comments on it. He shrank greatly from this; the more so because many of his young companions were around him and his "reformation was but three weeks old that day."



These circumstances, as he reasoned about them, led him to think it too soon for him to venture to open his lips for his Saviour, forgetting the difference between self-set service and compliance with the call of a loving Master. He held his peace, but when the meeting ended, was distressed with the thought of his disobedience to God; and the Friend for whom he worked, seeing his tears, tried to sooth him with some kind, wise words of cheer. The next time he went to meeting, he did not hesitate to share with others what he believed was given him for that purpose, and having done so, his heart was filled with peace. This was on Christmas Day, 1696, when he was about the age of twenty. A beginning thus made, it was more easy to obey the next summons to such service; but his spiritual life needed deepening, and it was but rarely that he found it his place to take any vocal part in meetings during the next year or two.

At one time, wishing to visit the neighbouring meeting of Yelland, he asked his friend Isaac Alexander, who was three or four years younger than himself, to be his companion. Whilst at that place they called on another young man, and had some conversation with him and his mother. The latter asked Samuel Bownas some questions about one or two passages of Scripture, and he says that his understanding was opened to preach to her the new birth, and that effectually.

It was soon after this that he told the elders of his

meeting that he was constrained to visit some distant meetings, and they provided him and his companion, Isaac Alexander, with certificates, signifying their approval. The young men's first journey occupied two months. To Samuel Bownas it was a time of much trial, so that one day he exclaimed to his friend, "Oh, that I was at my work again, and favoured with my former enjoyments of divine life!" But he afterwards writes, "The Lord let me see His kindness in leading me through the state of spiritual poverty, which was of great service to qualify me to speak to others in the like condition. This showed me that trials of sundry kinds were for my improvement in good, tending to my establishment in the true root of a divine and spiritual ministry. . . . This summer passed over, and by harvest-work at hay and corn I picked up a little money, having been almost penniless. Before I got to work, I travelled to a meeting fourteen or fifteen miles, three times forth and back, on foot and all alone, with only three halfpence (being all the money I had), and thinking to refresh myself on the way; but when I came near the house of entertainment, I found myself so strong and cheerful that I thought I might want it more another time, and kept it."

As the autumn approached, having bought a horse, he set out on a longer expedition; sometimes he found comfort in his labours, but at other times was depressed about them; perhaps the lack of suffi-

ciently nourishing food had something to do with this. In one meeting he stood up, not doubting it was the Lord's will that he should preach, but soon the power to do so left him. Greatly troubled at this, he sat down again, earnestly pleading for help in the secret of his soul, but the only answer which seemed to come to him was, "Thou runnest, and God has not sent thee; thou speakest, but God does not speak by thee; therefore thou shalt not profit the people." His distress was now extreme. "For a time I was bewildered," he writes, "not seeing where I was; but since it has plainly appeared to me that I was under the influence of the spirit of Anti-Christ. Begging heartily for help, I fell on my knees, and prayed with such fervency that few under the roof but were melted into tears, and it was such a time as I never had before nor since in prayer, as I remember."

During his visit to Leicestershire, a lady to whom his ministry was a heaven-sent message, when taking leave of him, after telling him a little of her spiritual state, offered him some pieces of gold, gracefully begging his acceptance of them as a token of her respect; she knew not how else, she said, to show her gratitude for the help he had afforded her. When declining the gift he told her that the only reward he wished was that she would be obedient to the Lord whom she was learning to know, and the hearing this, he said, would give him much joy.

As he conscientiously strove to fulfil the ministry which had been given him of the Lord, more ability was granted him to divide the word aright. He found great advantage from an earnest searching of the Holy Scriptures, and a careful examination of the text, in order to see where the strength of an argument lay. He had had doubts as to the propriety of speaking on more than one occasion on the same subject, lest by doing so he should lose the unction without which the words would be unavailing. "But the Lord," he writes, "was pleased to show me that old matter opened *in new life* was always new, and that it was the renewings of the Spirit alone that made it new."

After labouring in Yorkshire and eight other counties, he went to Bristol, and spent nearly five weeks in visiting meetings around that city. He then felt strongly attracted to Wales, and on his way attended the quarterly meeting of Hereford, which was held at Almeley. Here he met his friend Isaac Alexander, and we find these two young ministers, each frankly telling the other that he considered him grown in his ministry, and Samuel Bownas says that they found great good from speaking freely together; they held some meetings before going on to the Welsh yearly meeting at Llanidloes. Afterwards an elderly Friend, who could do a little in the way of interpreting, was Samuel Bownas's profitable companion

in Wales. After some further journeyings he returned home.

"I was now in a strait," he writes, "what course to take to get a little money, my linen and woollen both wanting to be repaired." He soon met with a young man who had just opened a business, and from him he obtained employment, and by working hard all the summer he laid by a small amount, and in the autumn prepared for a journey with his "good friend, Joseph Baines," whom he describes as "an Israelite indeed, meek as a lamb."

On account of some family trials, Joseph Baines had to leave his labours; but Bownas diligently continued his service, visiting many places twice, and sometimes holding fourteen meetings a week. Several persons of other denominations offered the use of their houses for meetings, and some of them afterwards became Friends. Clergymen and Dissenters were alike alarmed at this, and the young minister was called by some a cheat, and by others a Jesuit; but his faith was growing stronger, so, notwithstanding this state of things, he says that he "was very easy in his service, and found his heart much enlarged."

When attending the funeral of a Friend at Sherborne, he took his Bible from his pocket, and often referred to the text for proof, telling his attentive audience of the value which Friends set on the sacred writings, urging them to read the Bible care-

fully with the prayer for grace to practise what they read. A Baptist afterwards desired some conversation with Samuel Bownas, who replied that if he had any objections to make against what had been said, that was the most proper place, as the people were still present. The Baptist was obliged to admit that what had been spoken was in accordance with the Scriptures, and had been proved from them. He asked for some private conversation with Bownas, who told him where he had taken up his quarters; but he did not summon courage to pay the call, for he had been saying many things against Friends, stating that they denied the Holy Scriptures, would not have a Bible in any of their meetings, and never made use of it to prove what they preached.

When in his twenty-fifth year, in company with another young minister, named Isaac Thompson, Samuel Bownas started for Scotland, the prospect of religious service there having long rested on his heart. After his many times of trial he is now able to say that as their work grew upon them they went on "with boldness and cheerful minds," for he was beginning to learn something of the blessedness of so trusting God as to serve Him "without fear, in holiness and righteousness." In their journey from the Border to Dumfries they had the useful and animating companionship of James Dickenson. Samuel Bownas says, "We, by reason of youth and want of experience, were often very weak, and doubt-

ing whether we were right or not in the work ;” and much was he cheered when James Dickenson told them how weak he often felt himself to be. At Dumfries he said to them, “Lads, I find a concern to go into the street; will you go with me?” and there, with his trumpet-like voice, he addressed a quiet and attentive audience. The next morning he started for Portpatrick. His young friends went on to visit the Scotch meetings, and at Hamilton were, we learn, “finely refreshed with a small handful of living Friends.”

When at Kelso, on their return from the North of Scotland, it was suggested to them that they should visit Jedburgh, and a Friend named Samuel Robinson went with them as guide. On their arrival they went to an inn, the landlord of which refusing to receive them, they rode on to another. Here the host bade them come in, but told them that on the previous day the minister had publicly upbraided the Quakers in immoderate terms, saying they were the devil’s servants and were in debt to him for their ministry; yet he was taken aback when he saw one of his congregation taking shorthand notes, and told him not to think of writing down what was spoken at random. Although a meal was ordered and set before the travellers, Samuel Bownas found himself unable to eat. They soon asked the landlord to take charge of their saddle-bags, and this request made him imagine that his guests were going out for street-preaching.

He took Bownas by the hand, and, trembling as he spoke, begged that they would content themselves with a meeting with his household. "We think it our place," said the young soldier of the cross, "to preach to the inhabitants of the town; and thinkest thou that we shall be clear in the sight of God, whom we both fear and serve, by preaching to thee and thy family what we are required to preach to the people of the town?" "Go, and God preserve and bless you," was the reply, "but I fear the mob will pull down my house for giving you entertainment, and kill you for your goodwill." But Samuel Bownas bade him have no fear, and reminded him that the God whom they served was more powerful than the devil, and that not a hair of their heads could be hurt without his permission. The landlord, who now seemed more willing to let them go, followed at a distance to see what their fate might be.

In the chief street, which was very wide, was the market-cross, and soon after the Friends had ascended the steps, a man with a bunch of large keys came to them, and taking Bownas by the hand, said, "You must go to the Tolbooth." "For what?" was the reasonable remonstrance. "For preaching," was the answer. When told that they had not preached, and that it would be soon enough to put them into prison when they *did*, the man only said, "Ay! I ken very weel that you'll preach, by your looks!" The prison was very near, and thither they were conducted.



Soon a messenger arrived with the promise of liberty if they would leave the town without preaching, but of course no such compromise could be thought of. Bownas wrote a good letter to the Provost, explaining that his friends and himself had not come to disturb the peace nor preach heresy, as had been maliciously suggested by those who had their own motives for wishing to make the people believe such stories; "but rather in obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ, whose servants we are, for He hath bought us with His own most precious blood, and we are no more our own but His that bought us, whose power is unlimited; and as all power is limited by Him, so His power is not to be limited by any other power." And in the course of the letter he asks, "Does your Scotch law judge a man before it hear him?" He ends with the words, "This is from one that wishes thy welfare and salvation." The next day a message came from a country gentleman, who kindly invited the Friends to his house. They told the servant that they did not know when they should be set free; but he replied that his master had gone to speak to the Provost, who had no excuse for keeping them there; and before two hours had passed away they were liberated.

It was market-day, and the town was crowded with people from the country. As Bownas found the market-cross surrounded by buyers and sellers, he walked up the steep street with his friends to an

open place near the top of the hill, an admirable spot for preaching from. The street, which was an extremely wide one, was now filled with people down to the bottom of the slope, whilst those who were in-doors threw open their windows or went to their balconies as the three strangers took their stand. The speaker was Samuel Bownas, whose deportment, notwithstanding his youth, was dignified as well as manly. His voice was strong and clear, and his preaching was with a Divine authority, which commanded the attention of his hearers. It was a vast number that he now addressed, and much power was bestowed on him for the service. He afterwards poured out his soul in fervent prayer, and whilst thus engaged was arrested by two men, who led him to the prison-door. There he quietly declined entering without being first examined by the Provost or some other person holding office. One of the soldiers, who was acting as sentry, on hearing these words said—whilst suggestively handling his musket as if it were a bludgeon —“My countryman has spoken right and according to law and justice. If you will take him to the Provost for examination, you may ; but if not, touch him who dare !” Samuel Bownas’s molesters, seeing with whom they had to deal, took their departure, and from the convenient elevation on which he stood the young minister again spoke for about a quarter of an hour to a quiet, attentive audience. When, after thanking the English soldier, he descended the

prison steps, a crowd gathered around him, but most of them in a very respectful manner, although one or two of their number who were on horseback made a vain attempt to ride over him. It was with a peaceful heart that he joined his friends and went back to the inn, where, in answer to their invitation, their host sat down with them. Whilst at supper, he remarked on the earnest manner in which the people had listened that afternoon as they stood filling the wide street almost from the top to the bottom of the hill ; so Samuel Bownas could not forbear saying again that preaching to himself and his family merely would not have been a fulfilment of the duty God had set before them.

A message was now brought into the room from some gentlemen who solicited an interview with the strangers, and it proved to be a long one. After discussing some other points, they made inquiries about ministry, saying they understood how their own teachers acquired it, and by what authority they preached, but they wished to know how it was with the Quakers. Samuel Robinson, who had taken considerable part in this discussion, after reasoning with them for some time, said, "*I never did preach, and therefore I will leave it to them that do to give account how they came by it.*" Samuel Bownas then related to them his own early experience and call to the ministry, probably the most practical illustration that he could give ; and as he ended,

the ready talkers, who a little while before had been very tenacious of their own opinions, were wiping the tears from their eyes. He then drew out the certificate which had been granted him by the meeting of which he was a member. One of the gentlemen read it aloud at the request of the others, and when it was handed back to its owner a deep silence ensued. The latter then told them he had visited all Scotland where he had felt drawn in spirit to go, and this town of Jedburgh would probably be the last place. "And now," he added, "I must leave you to judge whether it is not reasonable for you to conclude at least that I think myself concerned by an Almighty power, else how could I have exposed myself to such an unruly mob as I have preached to this day?" But midnight was past, and the gentlemen took their leave, after courteously insisting on paying the landlord's reckoning.

It would seem that Samuel Bownas was no imitator of others, but that in his self-surrender he suffered his Divine Master to lay hold of, sanctify, and make use of the traits of his natural character. He seems never to have hesitated to refer to his own experience when he believed that by so doing he could help others. It is recorded of him that he was a liberal and open-hearted communicator of his religious experience unto all other men, without respect of persons. The morning after this remarkable visit to Jedburgh, Isaac Thomson and he crossed the

Border. At this time Bownas had no home; he tells us that he sometimes quartered at Gateshead, "at honest William Simpson's, when I did occasionally help them in their business, he being a blacksmith."

He was, however, getting ready for a mission to America, and was glad to visit many meetings in his own neighbourhood before his long absence. One of these was a time of such heavenly blessing that the comfort of it remained with him during his wide travels in the New World. He spent one night at the house of his friend William Ellis, who doubtless was warmly interested in the earnest young preacher who was about to follow his footsteps in the land where he had so faithfully laboured. Bownas describes him as "a great, good man, full of power, having great and solid experience concerning the ministry. His words were like 'apples of gold in pictures of silver;' for a long time after the sense and virtue of them stayed on my mind, to my great advantage."

It was in 1702, and at the age of twenty-six, that Samuel Bownas left England. Before sailing he wrote a letter "To the Meeting of Ministers in Kendal, and elsewhere in Westmoreland" (his native county), from which the following passage is taken:—

"My dearly beloved brethren and sisters,—In that love which in time past we have enjoyed together do

I heartily salute you. . . . We who apprehend ourselves called into the public station of preaching ought closely to wait on our Guide, to put us forth in the work. . . . Thus will our ministry edify those who hear it. And let us be singly devoted to the will of God, for if we are not, we may set ourselves to work when we should be quiet. Let us bear in mind that neither arts, parts, strength of memory, nor former experience will, without the sanctification of the Spirit, do anything for us to depend upon. Let us, therefore, I entreat you, keep to the living Fountain, the spring of eternal life opened by our Lord Jesus Christ in our hearts. I also desire that you would not neglect your day's work in visiting the dark corners of the counties about you, but be mindful of your service therein, as the Lord shall make way for it."

Of Samuel Bownas's own ministry and deportment, the chronicler Besse says, "He directed all the sheep of Christ to follow the voice of Christ Himself, the Good Shepherd, whose omnipresence renders His voice audible to every one of His sheep, however separate or dispersed throughout the world. His conversation was free, generous, and affable; neither did he shun the society of those whom he was sent to convert, his mission being somewhat correspondent to that of his Lord and Master, who declared concerning Himself, 'I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.'"

After visiting some meetings in Maryland, he was laid aside by a severe illness, which lasted for thirteen weeks. On his recovery he travelled through East

and West Jersey, where he met with great trial from a clergyman named George Keith, who had been a Friend, and who was much offended at Bownas's refusal to accept a challenge to a public dispute in Maryland. When in Long Island, Samuel Bownas arranged to have a meeting in the village of Hempstead, and Keith appointed one at the same hour; the temper of the latter was not improved when his audience, attracted by the ministry of Samuel Bownas, as his clear tones reached their ears, forsook him and flocked around the Friend. Soon Keith found himself alone with the man who had acted as clerk, and one William Bradford, whose disorderly behaviour had caused him to be disowned by the Society of Friends. Soon afterwards Keith and Bradford agreed that the latter should go to one of Samuel Bownas's meetings, in the hope of hearing some doctrinal expression to which exception might be taken. The manner in which he set about this business was worthy of the motive which led him into it. After drawing a note-book from his pocket, and producing pen and ink, he stared steadily in the preacher's face, then opening his book he wrote a line or two, closed it, and again betook himself to staring, in the hope of making the speaker lose his self-possession. "But it was past his skill," Bownas writes, "for I felt both inward and outward strength, and Divine power to fill my heart, and my face was like brass to all opposition."

It was not long before Samuel Bownas had good ground for suspecting that mischief was brewing, and some persons who were not Friends advised him to seek safety by leaving the neighbourhood at once; but this he did not think it right to do. A week later, whilst he was attending the large half-yearly meeting at Flushing, the high-sheriff entered the meeting-house with a large company, armed in a miscellaneous fashion with guns, swords, halberts, clubs, and pitchforks—a needless display of force for such a non-resisting company. Walking up to the ministers' gallery, the sheriff took hold of Samuel Bownas's hand, and told him that he was his prisoner. "By what authority?" he asked. The sheriff then drew out a warrant signed by two magistrates: "You are hereby, in Her Majesty's name, strictly charged and commanded to attack the body of *Samuel Bowne*, a Quaker, if he can be found in your bailiwick, and to bring his body before us, to answer to such matters of misdemeanour as shall on Her Majesty's behalf be objected against him; and hereof fail not at your peril." The sheriff himself had no wish to act harshly, and the Friends easily induced him to remain for the meeting, together with his followers, who willingly laid down their arms outside the meeting-house. For some time no words were spoken. "Why does he not preach?" gently whispered some of the strangers; but they came to the conclusion amongst themselves



that the fact of his being a prisoner was enough to silence him. But soon the arrested minister, finding "the Word like a fire," could no longer forbear to give utterance to it, and the sheriff and his company spoke well of the meeting afterwards. He was very courteous to the Friends who conversed with him about the case of Bownas, and said that the latter need not appear until five days later, when the meetings would be over; the last of them was so large that it was thought nearly 2000 persons were present.

One of the four magistrates before whom he appeared tried hard to have him set at liberty, but in vain. The prisoner was under much disadvantage, as a clergyman who was in the court put the worst interpretation on everything he said. Moreover, as he quaintly writes, "They had shut up a man behind, in a closet, to take in shorthand the examination, that they might peruse the same to their own advantage; but the man was so very drunk that he lost his papers going home, and a Friend providentially found them, to their great disappointment and shame. Great inquiry was made about them among the people, in vain."

The decision to which the justices came was that Samuel Bownas must enter into a £2,000 bail (himself for £1,000, and two of his friends for £500 each), or else be committed to the common gaol. He said he could enter into no such agreement

conscientiously, even if as small a sum as three half-pence would do; and when the young magistrate who was kindly disposed towards him offered to be bound for him, Samuel Bownas, supported by all his friends, strenuously declined the generous offer, whilst explaining the reason for so doing. The court did not break up until a late hour, and then the benevolent magistrate begged leave to take the prisoner home with him, promising that he should be forthcoming on the morrow. He was most hospitably entertained, and found his host's wife was a Friend. The next day a mittimus was brought in, which stated that Samuel Bownas had spoken "scandalous lies" concerning the Church of England, and was charged with other misdemeanours at the meeting at Hempstead; he was therefore to be kept in the common gaol until delivered by the due course of Her Majesty's laws.

After an imprisonment of three months he was tried before the Chief-Justice of the province. He had prepared a reply to Bradford's evidence, and it had so much influence on the grand jury that they endorsed the bill they brought in *Ignoramus*. The judge was very angry, and exclaimed, "Gentlemen, surely you have forgotten your oaths, and for so doing I could give you some hard names, but at present shall forbear. Is *this* your verdict touching the Quaker?" "It is, sir," answered the foreman of the jury. "I demand your reasons," the judge

went on, "why you have not found the bill against him?" One of the jury, an adept in the law, now replied, "We are sworn to keep the Queen's secrets, our fellows', and our own, and for that reason we declare no reasons;" and, when the judge spoke threateningly, he added that juries were not to be menaced with threats of stocks or fines. The judge, thus boldly faced, altered his tone, and with flattering words bade them take back the bill and reconsider it; but when the court met the next day, the jury adhered to their former decision. On hearing this, the indignant judge tried, by having the jury questioned one by one, to wrest from them the reason of their determination; then giving strict orders that the prisoner should be kept more closely than before, he added, "As justice cannot be done here, I will send him back to London chained to the man-of-war's deck like the vile criminals." Samuel Bownas was overwhelmed with dismay when he heard this threat. He writes: "The power of darkness was so strong upon me, that I desired death rather than life, fearing that if I was so served, I should be an object of derision to all on board. . . . Having lost my faith, I thought myself the most wretched among men, and scarcely able to live under it."

But God had not forgotten him. An old gentleman, who had been the Chief-Justice of the province, and who was thoroughly familiar with the law, paid him a call; and as Bownas rose to give him a respect-

ful greeting, he clasped him in his arms and said, with tears, "Dear Samuel, the Lord hath made use of you to put a stop to arbitrary proceedings in our courts of justice. There has never been so successful a stand made against it as at this time. And now they threaten to send you to England chained to the man-of-war's deck! Fear not, Samuel. They can no more send you there than they can send me. . . . They will never be able now to get a jury to answer their end, the eyes of the country are so clearly opened by your case. Had the Presbyterians stood as you have done, they had not so tamely left their meeting-houses to the Church, but that people had never so good a hand at suffering in the cause of conscience as they had in persecuting others that differed from them." The young minister was greatly comforted, and the event proved that his friend was right. According to the judge's orders, he was now locked up in a small room made of logs, which two years earlier had been pronounced unfit for a prison. He was counselled to demand his liberty as a legal right, but the claim was not admitted. Meanwhile George Keith published a paper in which he accused Bownas in the strongest terms with reproaching the Church, the ordinances, and the Government; but this circular was so manifestly dictated by malice, that it produced a contrary result from that he aimed at.

During Samuel Bownas's imprisonment he received

a visit from an Indian chief and three of his tribe. "Are you a Christian?" the chief asked, "and are *they* Christians, too, that keep you here?" Some interesting conversation followed. After repeated adjournments, the sheriff received an order to call a fresh jury, and was secretly bidden to choose such men as would be likely to prove conveniently pliable. These instructions he himself showed to Bownas, expressing his detestation of them, and assuring him that he should not obey them; and the new jury, like the old, could lay nothing to the charge of the prisoner. Thus, after more than a year's bondage, he was set at liberty, to the great joy of the neighbourhood. As might be expected, the meetings he now held in every part of the province were very large.

In a district he afterwards visited he felt an "uncommon and weighty concern" to ask for a meeting with the ministers, and in it he spoke seasonable words of caution, as some of their number were wont to go into extremes in preaching and vocal prayer, without due regard to the needed anointing and guidance of the Holy Spirit, a mistake which they now themselves admitted; and, on revisiting these meetings, the faithful preacher was much cheered at the satisfactory change in the ministry.

When he was at Newbury he had a meeting in a place which was used for boat-building, and a very large company assembled, including six preachers, it

was said. The people were most disorderly, and tried by their outcries to drown the voices of those who spoke. After a while Samuel Bownas drew out his Bible, and stood waiting for silence. When they grew quiet, he told them he was an Englishman who had travelled extensively, but had never before met with such rude conduct in a meeting. In the course of his address he remarked that if men did not lead Christian lives they were still unbelievers, and quoted the text, "Faith without works is dead." He was interrupted with the exclamation, "You impose upon us; there is no such text!" The minister at once paused, turned to the passage, and bade those who had Bibles with them look for themselves, and then went on to point out the difference between true and false faith. Some of the audience manifested much feeling, and the meeting ended well.

Soon after his return to England he married a Friend to whom he had become engaged before going to America. He was now about the age of thirty. His wife, he says, was a true sympathiser, and when he sometimes feared how they should make both ends meet, she would cheer him by saying that if they got little, they would spend less—she was not at all fearful; nor did she fail to help in more delicate matters, and when he was cast down by the fear that his ministry was not "so living as it had been," she tried to turn him away from his discouragement. When he told her that the Lord was calling him to

visit Ireland, she gave him up so heartily and cheerfully that it strengthened him for his work. She had foreseen, she said, that she should often be left alone, and she had made up her mind never to hinder his ministry; the Lord would help her. She died in 1719, after a happy union of twelve or thirteen years. In the following spring, "putting off all business," as he says, he spent the next year or two chiefly in Gospel service in England and Scotland.

In 1726, after a long and wearisome voyage, he again landed in the New World. His tarriance there was only for about eighteen months, but his travels were arduous, for he visited nearly all the meetings, and most of them twice, or more frequently. His strength, although heavily taxed by hardships and extremes of temperature, held out through all, and it was with a joyful heart that he set sail for England. The homeward voyage was a perilous one, for a violent tempest suddenly arose, in which it seemed as if the vessel would be engulfed by the waves. The sailors talked of cutting down the masts, but he begged the captain to forbear, and trust in God. They were in a sorry plight, tossing on a tempestuous sea with a broken tiller, several feet of water in the hold, provisions washed overboard, and casks of fresh water staved; yet, cold, wet, and weary, amidst it all we find him comforting himself with the promises of God. After five weeks of hardship the welcome Eddystone Light was seen, and the good

minister indulged in the characteristic but unfulfilled hope of getting into Plymouth by meeting-time. Two days later he reached his home, such joy filling his heart that he could hardly refrain from exclaiming, "God is just in all His ways, and rewardeth peace into the bosoms of those who fear and obey Him."

Of the next twelve years Samuel Bownas gives but a concise account. "I was diligent in my way, minding my business, and attending public religious meetings, &c., until the year 1740, when I found a concern to visit the North of Ireland." Many parts of England were afterwards revisited by him on Gospel service. In a meeting at Coanwood we find him speaking of the difference between "a human qualification" for the ministry "by literature . . . too often without the sanctification of the heart," and "a spiritual qualification, which sanctifies and purifies the conscience, fitting it for receiving the knowledge of the Divine will by inspiration of the Holy Spirit." When writing of the Friends' London yearly meeting of 1748, he says, "Many hopeful young people of both sexes attended it, who seemed very likely to come up in the places of the faithful already gone, and going, to their long home, and my heart rejoiced to see and find in them a right concern for the cause of the Gospel." During the last four years of his life he took no long journeys, but his ministry, notwithstanding the infirmities of old age, was lively



and powerful to the last. He died in the early part of 1753, at the age of seventy-seven.

"Steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord," seem fitting words for summing up such a life. In this age of many opinions, much theory, and constant criticism, do we not need the same old-fashioned singleness of eye to Christ? "There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit," the Giver of all gifts. "And there are differences of service, but the same Lord" of all the servants. "And there are diversities of work, but it is the same God which worketh all in all." Truly there are many developments of the same Power. And may it not be that the work will be given in some proportion to our prayerfulness, our faith, our willingness for service, though that work may be a very quiet one, scarcely marked by the eye of man? "I have sometimes thought," writes Elizabeth Carne, "that in another world scarcely anything will surprise us more than our blindness in this world to *the work we might have done, and the power we had to do it.*"

"Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. THEREFORE, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

## WILLIAM RECKITT.

"The outward modes of worship are various ; but wherever any are true ministers of Jesus Christ, it is from the operation of His Spirit upon their hearts, first purifying them, and thus giving them a just sense of the condition of others."—JOHN WOOLMAN.



## WILLIAM RECKITT.

"Oh, break my heart ; but break it as a field  
Is by the plough up-broken for the corn :  
Oh, break it as the buds, by green leaf sealed,  
Are, to unloose the golden blossom, torn.  
Love would I offer unto love's great Master,  
Set free the odour, break the alabaster."

—T. T. LYNCH.

WILLIAM RECKITT was born at Lea, near Gainsborough, Lincolnshire, in 1706, and his parents were Friends. Whilst still a little child he lost his mother, and at the age of nine he was bound apprentice to a weaver by his father, whose delicate state of health prevented him from supporting his children. Sometimes the lad's eleven years of laborious servitude were briefly varied by harvest-work, for which his master "let him out." So industrious and steady was he during this vague semblance of a holiday, that the farmer for whom he toiled found him as faithful a servant as the weaver did, and thought it needless to look after William. It was at this period of his life that the ministry of a Friend, who was on a religious visit to the neighbour-

hood, was greatly blessed to him, and left a lasting impression.

When he was about eighteen, the death of his sweet only sister, and his only brother's choice of a worldly life, were trials which he keenly felt; but he had given his young heart's love to the Lord who had died for him, and might have said, even in the depth of his sorrow—

“Now all my way appears  
Steps unto heaven;  
All that Thou sendest me  
In mercy given;  
Angels to beckon me  
Nearer, my God, to Thee,  
Nearer to Thee.”

At the age of twenty-five, William Reckitt married a young woman named Ellen Maw, who proved to be a faithful and loving wife, and tender mother. Ten years later he began to speak in meetings, to the comfort and edification of his friends; and after a diligent use of his gift in his own meeting, and some neighbouring ones, he visited those in Essex. He was accompanied by Robert Kinsley, who was also his associate in a visit to London, which was affectionately remembered there even thirty years later. Missions to the West of England, a part of Wales, Yorkshire, and Ireland followed.

In the latter part of 1756 he bade farewell to the friends who had borne him company to Gravesend,

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and went on board the ship *Lydia*, bound for America. There were only three other passengers on board, and he found them, as well as the sailors "very loving," as he says, though he often reproved the latter for swearing. As the wind was unfavourable, the vessel lay in the Downs for two days, and in this waiting time William Reckitt's mind was burdened by an undefined dread of coming danger. A day or two later, whilst they were off Plymouth, as he was quietly sitting in the cabin in the evening, "Something opened in my mind," he writes, "concerning my own preservation, which I thought somewhat strange, but soon saw a cause for it."

About eight o'clock the next morning, the mate came down to give the captain the alarming news that a French privateer was just astern of them. If a more vigilant watch had been kept, the peril might have been avoided, but it was now too late, and a shower of shot made William Reckitt fear for the safety of the men. The captain was busy in the cabin looking after his own property, until the men besought him to come on deck. Soon the furious Frenchmen came on board, and, "like so many hungry animals, fell to hunting and searching for what they could find." One of them, however, assuming a different manner, said to William Reckitt, "Sir, I desire you will give me your money and watch, and I will give them to you again." "I have not much, and do not choose to part with it," was

the reply, but as the man became very urgent, William Reckitt handed him a guinea, which did not satisfy him. The officers were now in haste to get all into the boat. William Reckitt would thankfully have remained on board the vessel, for he feared the roughness of the sea, but this he was not allowed to do, and soon the fear of death was taken away, though the rope which a sailor handed him was so short that he could only let it go, not knowing whether he should fall into the sea or the boat; two of the English sailors had been drowned just before. When the boat came alongside the French privateer, the crew of the *Lydia* helped William Reckitt to get on board, where he found himself amongst a crowd whom he thought looked more like brutes than men.

He soon found himself placed behind a large chest of arms in the cabin, and during the long hours he was left there he prayed earnestly for strength and patience. As night drew on, the Frenchmen came to the cabin, and soon asked the English captain who William Reckitt was. On learning that he was a Quaker minister bound for Pennsylvania, they spoke to him with politeness, bade him ask for what he wanted, and invited him to take some food, but for this he had no inclination. Soon they took him to the hold, which was so thickly hung with hammocks that he had to crawl on his hands and knees in order to reach the one allotted to him; and as others

followed to their resting-places, they lifted him up as they crept underneath his hammock, some of them finding no softer couch than the bare boards of the floor. What with the extreme exhaustion of the air and the fear that, notwithstanding the fine speeches of his captors, they were devising mischief or violence, he was ready to faint, and almost doubted if he should live to see the dawn of day. But God renewed his faith in this hour of sore need. "In this great strait," he says, "the Lord appeared for my help. I sensibly felt strength administered, and it arose in my mind that those I was afraid of would not hurt me, and in a little time, being much wearied, I fell into a sound sleep till morning." Yet it must have been a refreshing variety to get on deck and to exchange the poisonous air of the hold for the fresh sea-breezes of an autumn morning. He soon found that his fellow-prisoners looked to him for sympathy, and his heart was saddened as they told him of their hardships and of their dread of soon finding themselves close captives in France, a fear which was heightened by the stories they had heard of the sufferings such prisoners underwent.

"I spake as comfortably to them as I could," he says, "and exhorted them to live in the fear of the Lord. And I was much favoured with stillness and a sweet composure of mind, which, to my great comfort, I found did strengthen and fortify me against the cruel assaults of the enemy. The Good Shepherd of Israel did cast His mantle of love



over me and stilled my crying, so that I was in a good degree made willing to submit to what He should see fit to suffer to come upon me. Whilst I was here, fervent and strong desires were in my heart for those I had left behind me in many places, that they might be preserved in the fear of the Lord."

For several days he could take but little food. As he paced the deck, he found that the French officers, with the exception of the captain, seemed kindly disposed.

Whilst Reckitt was sitting in the cabin one evening, a young Frenchman pointed at him, and, speaking in Latin, asked an officer who was on board about the principles of Friends. "They are a strange people," was the reply, given in the same language, "who disown baptism and the Lord's Supper." They continued the conversation, and came to the conclusion that those who did not observe these rites could not be saved. Although not a classical scholar, William Reckitt's knowledge of Latin was sufficient to enable him to understand much of what they said, and he afterwards told the officer that he had acted very improperly in giving false views of Friends. "In what?" said he. Then William Reckitt told him that, although sacraments are nowhere written of in the Bible, Baptism and the Supper are, and that Friends believed both to be essential: a spiritual baptism which needed no water, and spiritual supping with the Lord, who said, "Behold, I stand at

the door and knock ; and if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me," and this was the communion of saints.

As the vessel drew near the French coast, she was pursued by an English man-of-war, and the prisoners cherished warm hopes of deliverance ; but as there were dangerous rocks near the shore, the English vessel dared not continue the chase, and after firing only one shot, sheered off. Very great was the disappointment of the captives, but Reckitt did not fully share in it, for he was trusting the whole matter to the Lord. Yet a night of great anxiety was before him. After the vessel had safely entered the small harbour, the French captain went on shore, and his men, anticipating no adventure, went to rest as usual. Since the capture of the *Lydia* the crew of the French privateer had boarded a man-of-war and brought all her men away with one exception. Now, in the absence of the French captain, these more recent prisoners, with their own captain at their head, talked of "cutting" the vessel out of the harbour. Reckitt was much alarmed when he heard of this scheme. Just then all who were in the cabin had gone to their hammocks except himself, the captain of the captured man-of-war, and a young Frenchman, who, unarmed, was keeping guard.

"Are you not for bed?" said Reckitt to the captain, who was looking much troubled.

"I cannot go to bed," was the reply. William Reckitt begged him not to run the great risk of taking the vessel out of the harbour, but he said he should have no difficulty in this if he had any one to stand by him. Reckitt answered that dear as his liberty was to him, he should be very sorry for the attempt to be made, as it would probably cause much bloodshed, and at the same time reminded him that they were lying under a fort, and that a man-of-war was but a short distance off, and they had a very dangerous harbour to get out of; but he gave little heed apparently to these arguments. Reckitt then went to his hammock, but not to rest; he soon arose, and found that on board all the vessel seemed to be quiet, and that there were but few hands on deck. Then, entering the cabin, he summoned up his courage, and told the captain that he had made up his mind to hinder any tumult if it were in his power, and that he should suppose that no man in his right senses would think of so wild a scheme. Midnight was now at hand, and the men who were engaged in the plot, thinking it was time to set to work, came on deck uncalled, and in high spirits made sundry signals to the captain to show that they were ready. Great was William Reckitt's anxiety; he sat down beside the captain, with the intention of laying hold of him if he attempted to take up a weapon which was near at hand. Meanwhile a conflict was going on in the

captain's mind, and again and again he was on the point of carrying out his plan, but, to quote William Reckitt's words, "The Lord in His great mercy did interpose, and my mind began to be calm and still, and all fear was taken away. I then, looking at him, saw his countenance become more composed. I asked him if he would not go to bed. He threw down his pen, and said he would."

The night was now pretty far spent, and the men, who had grown weary of waiting on the deck, taking it for granted that the plan was abandoned, went to their hammocks, and William Reckitt, having made sure that the captain was settled in his, lay down upon a partition of boards, which was so narrow that he could only lie on his side, but now, with a mind at rest, he soon fell asleep. By sunrise the French captain returned to the vessel, accompanied by some other Frenchmen, two of the party being friars in their gowns, who, Reckitt imagined, wished to see what they could get in the scramble. When breakfast was over, the prisoners were searched. William Reckitt was told that his money was needed, and the French officers who were examining him took all they could find of any value about him. Not content with this, they called him up again, for they had got hold of the fancy that he owned a large amount of money and a gold watch. "I was so grieved with them," he writes, "that I could not hold my peace; but said they pretended to be gentle-

men and men of honour, but now they did not appear to be such, for it was good works made men truly honourable. And as to what they could do to me, I said I was not afraid. Indeed, all fear was taken away from me, and I did not seem afraid of my life ; but whether I did well in telling them so I afterwards queried. . . . However, I came off pretty well, for they let me put on and carry away as many clothes as served to keep me warm."

Eleven days later they were landed at a town called Roscone, and many people assembled to see them. Two priests came up to William Reckitt, one of whom asked him what was his religion, and whether he could speak Latin. He replied that as a prisoner they had no business with him, and that he would be glad to be asked no more questions ; and so they turned away, saying, " He is for no controversy ;" but William Reckitt adds, that if he had been asked an honest question concerning the hope that was in him, he would have answered it. On the departure of the priests, another gentleman came, and expressed his regret at seeing Reckitt there, and invited him, as well as the captain of the *Lydia* and two others, to the home of one of his friends, where refreshment was brought them. A lady who was in the house was so much concerned on hearing that they were to walk to Morlaix that night, that she sent out to hire horses, but without success. She then strictly ordered the soldiers who

guarded the captives to engage horses at the first halting-place at her expense, an injunction which was fulfilled at the next town.

The little company did not reach Morlaix until night, and then had to stand or sit in the street, cold as the weather was, until orders could be received from the commissary, a trial which troubled William Reckitt chiefly on account of the poor English sailors, who had walked until they were in a perspiration, and some of whom were ill. After an hour or more had passed away, the order was given that they should go to prison; but a gentleman who had some connection with the prison met them in the street, and led William Reckitt, the captain, and two men from the man-of-war, to a tavern, where they might get for themselves what refreshments they chose to have and pay for.

A young French officer who had showed William Reckitt some attention on board the privateer, and who had been very indignant at the manner in which he had been searched, sometimes called on him. When the captives appeared before the commissary, it was stated that such as could not find bail must go to prison. A merchant named Sermanson said that he would be bail for William Reckitt as readily as for his own brother. Not long afterwards the Englishmen were examined at the Admiralty Office. When something like an oath was tendered to them, Reckitt said that he could not take it, as

a matter of conscience; he was then more closely pressed with questions as to his name, residence, and family, and as to what preparations for war were being made in England.

"I was heavy and sorrowful in my mind both day and night," he says, "for some time, and much afraid lest I should bring dishonour to truth by unfaithfulness or some slip or other, for want of care and watchfulness in that strange land, separated from my brethren and deprived of all outward help and comfort. But this to me was a profitable season, for I found the fear of the Lord which was then in my heart did preserve me from evil and falling into temptation. Though such company as I had was very unpleasant to me, yet when by honest inquirers I was asked questions concerning our faith and principles, I was helped to give them an answer according to the hope that was in me, the Scriptures freely opening, and all things brought to my remembrance, sufficient to put to silence and stop the mouth of gainsayers."

Whilst William Reckitt was at Morlaix, M. Ser-manson often invited him to his house. "Why are you abroad in such troublous times?" he asked one evening. "I believed it to be my duty," was the reply, "for nothing else would have induced me to leave all that are near to me in the world, as wife and children, but a sense of duty to God and obedience to what I believe to be required of me; for as to outward advantage I have nothing of that in my view." The merchant then interpreted to his wife,

who was sitting by, and who, when she heard that William Reckitt had left wife and children behind, said, "*That cannot be consistent with the will of God.*" He reminded her that those who love father and mother, wife or children, houses or lands, more than Christ are not worthy of Him. After a little more talk she said, "You are a saint, and have overcome the temptations of the world."

"What I am is by grace," he answered; "I have nothing to boast of. By grace I am saved out of many temptations of the world; yet I am a man of like passions and liable to man's weaknesses, no longer safe than whilst I keep upon the watch." M. Sermanson was interested in seeing William Reckitt's certificate for religious service in America. "I can but admire that you should be at so much pains without any view to outward advantage," he said.

At the tavern Reckitt met with a variety of company, and was well catechised by those who could speak English. One day, when in a large company, he was asked why the Quakers would not fight. He answered that the weapons of the early believers were not carnal, but spiritual; and that those who were now under the peaceable government of the great King of kings could not fight with carnal weapons, although there might seem as great need for it as when our Lord was delivered to the Jews. *He* had said, "If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight!" As they talked of



these things, the power of God, he says, was over them.

After a while, William Reckitt, and those of his companions who, like himself, were prisoners at large, were sent to the town of Carhaix. M. Sermanson commended him to the notice of a counsellor-at-law who resided there, and who showed him much kindness. One day when William Reckitt had been quoting from the Bible in proof of the soundness of his arguments, the counsellor said, "If I had put on a priest's gown instead of that I now wear, I should have thought it my business to have searched more into the Scriptures." But Reckitt told him that he took him for a man of understanding, who well knew that it ought to be every one's business to search into the things that belong to his peace, for it was a dangerous thing to pin our faith to another man's sleeve.

After a while M. Sermanson, through his London correspondent, succeeded in recommending William Reckitt's case to the secretary of the Sick and Wounded Office, and thus, after a confinement of five months' duration, he was released. On reaching Morlaix, he found a Dutch vessel bound for Ostend, and it was arranged that the captain should take him to England if the wind would allow. Soon he had the joy of a warm welcome from his family and friends.

Some seven weeks later he again set sail for

America, after attending the yearly meeting of the Society of Friends. "I took leave of my wife and children in a solemn manner," he says; "I also settled my outward affairs." After a ten weeks' voyage he reached Philadelphia, and was much pleased to meet with several Friends from Europe, who had come on a like errand to his own. Afresh cheered by Christian fellowship, his heart was filled with praise. "Blessed be the name of the Lord," he exclaims; "I may in truth say His name has been to me a strong tower, and thither I have run and found safety."

He visited nearly all the meetings in America, a labour of love which occupied about two years. At Shrewsbury, New Jersey, he had a memorable time in a very large meeting, where people of all ranks were present, in which he spoke of God's mercy and goodness, and of the great things He will do for them that trust in Him. Of another meeting he remarks, that many seem to be "worshipping only in the outward court, in the form without the power." At the Blue Mountains he heard sad stories of the havoc wrought by the Indians in burning houses, murdering and carrying off captives; but the peace-honouring Friends were unhurt, though many of them had left their lawfully-purchased lands on the farther side of the Blue Ridge. In this neighbourhood he lodged at the home of an aged Friend and his wife, who were

“very loving” to him, he says. The Indians had been within a few miles of their dwelling, but they were kept from fear, and though they had neither bolt nor bar, they did not ever pull the latch-string at night.

“Stronger than strongest fortresses,  
The shadow of His hand.”

In Virginia his heart was gladdened by meeting with a Friend named Samuel Spavold, who was diligently labouring as a minister of Christ. He writes of the comforting seasons they had together, particularly at Black Creek quarterly meeting, which was attended by many Friends. “I was glad to see them,” he says, “but what made me more glad, and brought us nearer to one another, was that the Lord favoured us with His presence and filled our hearts with His pure love.”

Whilst travelling long distances through wild and almost uninhabited regions, with many rivers and swamps to cross, it was a great help to him to have the company of two young men. One of the first meetings they held was at the house of a Friend, who gave good notice to his widely-scattered neighbours. His rooms were small, but so skilfully had he arranged seats in the courtyard under the windows, that all could hear without unpleasant crowding; and William Reckitt was glad that the good man’s labour was rewarded by the very satisfactory meeting held on his premises. Refreshed

in body and mind, the travellers set out again on their toilsome journey. After crossing a branch of Cape Fear River, they found they were on a great swamp, but by laying down boards in some places for the horses to tread on, they at length got over it, and entered the woods, where, as the weather was wet and gloomy, it was difficult to know in what direction they were going; but before night they espied a small house, which, weary as they were, was a welcome sight. At Dun's Creek he parted with his two kind helpers, after they had travelled more than 500 miles together. The leave-taking was a loving one, for he had become much attached to the young men, who, he writes—

“Did what they did with great freedom and cheerfulness, not begrudging a little time nor a little outward substance for the sake of the good cause of truth. Such will not lose their reward. . . . No one (he adds) can tell how good the Lord is, but such as have tasted and seen His marvellous ways of working, and how He can spread a table for those that in faithful obedience give up to His requiring in a very wilderness; for He neither lets them want for inward nor outward food. . . . We have lacked nothing, Lord.”

William Reckitt spent about a month in Philadelphia, paying religious visits to some families, and also attending the meetings as they came in course, though taking but little part in them. After an allusion to this, he says:—

"I saw it was good for the Lord's servants to be contented with all the openings and shuttings of His hand. . . . I could not but rejoice in thankfulness of heart that I was still in my spirit being made sensible it was the Lord's doing. And indeed it is marvellous in our eyes that the Captain of our salvation should call for such a cessation of arms for a season, that His soldiers may take a little rest under His royal pavilion and canopy of pure love."

In the autumn of 1759 he set sail for Barbadoes. During the voyage he renewed his covenant, and writes of being a living witness that God is a covenant-keeping God with His people. Most fervent were the prayers that he put up at this time for his wife and children that they might be granted a fresh visitation of the Lord's goodness, and that the Churches might so

"abide in His love, stand in His counsel, and live in His holy fear that we might still be a people to His praise . . . that the blessings which He had laid up in store might not be withheld, but plentifully showered down upon His heritage. . . . At that time (he continues) if I rightly know my own heart, the fear of death was also removed, and I trust the occasion of it, which is sin; for I did not find that my conscience condemned me, though I well know I have nothing to trust in but Divine mercy through my dear Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, *in whom and by whom all our sins are taken away, and we are redeemed unto God, and that by His most precious blood.*"

A trial of faith was at hand, for which this renewed and trustful surrender of his will was a blessed preparation. Soon the vessel was seized by a French privateer from Martinico; his money, his linen, and some other articles of clothing were taken from him. With beautiful simplicity he writes:—"I do not remember I either murmured or repined at what had befallen me, or that any distrustful thoughts rose in my heart so as to trouble or oppress my spirit, which I esteemed as one of the most singular favours amongst the many I have received from the great and merciful Hand." But was it a *singular* favour, or rather was it not the fulfilment of the promise, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee"?

The captives were landed at St. Peter's and placed in prison. The room in which they were confined was about twelve feet square, and here twenty prisoners did not find much space. But under what conceivable circumstances will not the influence of a righteous man tell for good? His fellow-prisoners learnt to behave courteously to him, though he had often reproved them, and exhorted them to lead better lives. The weather was oppressively hot, and both the yard and loathsome lodging-room were exposed to the sun during much of the day. He was able to take but little food, and could scarcely keep from fainting; indeed, so weak did he become that it was difficult to him to walk at all in the yard.

But God made a way of escape ; by the favour of the commissary they were set at liberty, and placed on board a ship bound for the island of St. Christopher's. This was a six days' voyage, during which William Reckitt's sufferings were in some respects increased, for being unable to endure the heat and closeness of the cabin, he lay on the deck at night exposed to dew and gusts of rain, which aggravated the severe illness that hardship had brought on. After landing at St. Christopher's he began to get back his strength, and held several good meetings there. When passing the island of Nevis, on his voyage from Martinico, he had felt attracted to the inhabitants, and although he was told that there was but little prospect of getting a meeting there, he did not feel disheartened. In company with Caleb Copeland, a young American, he took the few hours' voyage to Charlestown, the chief place on the island. As just then the sessions were being held, the town was unusually full, and the strange minister attracted pretty much attention, which was not altogether politely shown. The gentlemen of the grand jury, however, invited him to dine with them, but the lateness of the hour prevented him from doing so. An elderly clergyman took pains to make arrangements for William Reckitt to have a meeting in the courthouse. He asked Reckitt to go there with him, which he did, not knowing that the dinner-party had not yet separated. The clergyman told them

that he had with him a gentleman who wanted to give them a sermon if they would allow the hall to be used for a meeting. On hearing this, the judge started up angrily, saying, "We have not yet done, and besides, we want no sermons; for my part, I never loved to hear one in my life!" William Reckitt remembered how many people were in the town that day, and thought he ought not to abandon the plan of having a meeting; he, therefore, at the suggestion of the clergyman, made use of a room at the tavern. It was a convenient place for the purpose, and he tells us that he "found everything in good order except the minds of the people." They were at first very rude and restless, yet after a while became quiet, and the meeting was spoken of with approval afterwards; and when a second meeting was held in the same place, there was a large attendance, and he describes it as "a solemn, baptizing time," when the presence and power of the Lord had dominion over all else. At the close a minister arose and spoke of his desire that what they had heard might have a good effect. He asked William Reckitt to come to his house, and said, "I see the advantage you have that you do not tie yourself to one text of Scripture, as we do, and so you can speak plainly to the several states of the people, for it cannot be supposed that one remedy is suited for every disease." Then William Reckitt spoke to him of the *unlimited* power of the Holy Spirit, and they parted with affection.



On the evening of the same day he received a message from a gentleman who requested a call. After questioning him about his recent imprisonment, he expressed the hope that he would remain longer on the island, and also told him there were many descendants of Friends there who would be glad to welcome him. But William Reckitt believed it was now right for him to leave, trusting that God would in His own time send faithful labourers to that island, and many others, "where the Gospel rain had not been so plentifully bestowed." He adds—

"Oh, Old England and North America, though these people are too much in the churlish dog's nature, yet many of them would be glad to partake of the crumbs that fall from your table. You have often loathed the honeycomb, and these poor souls are wandering upon the barren mountains of a lifeless profession, seeking the living amongst the dead. May we, therefore, who have received the knowledge of the truth and been so often watered, be faithful, and bring forth fruits answerable to the blessings received. Then will the Lord, I am fully persuaded, send forth from amongst us such as shall bring them to Christ, the Good Shepherd, and to the fold of true rest and peace."

When, after his return to St. Christopher's, he was invited to the houses of those who kept slaves, he spoke to them on the sinfulness of the practice of buying, selling, and holding men in bondage.

Although his plans for service had, in the good providence of God, been altered by hindering circumstances, he had the comfort of trusting—or may it not be said of *seeing*?—that through all his Saviour had guided him to the right work by the right way. Yet, notwithstanding this, he says, “I have not been insensible that mouths would be opened, not only against me (in saying I was wrong led or under a deception), but also against the truth. For the truth hath many enemies, and none greater and readier to judge others than those who are making a profession of it, but dwell not in the life and power.”

On the return voyage to Philadelphia he had several good meetings with the sailors. After spending a little time in that city, he attended a conference with the Indians which was held at Wilmington, and an interesting young Indian acted as his interpreter.

Notwithstanding rough weather and a leaky vessel, William Reckitt reached his home in safety early in the year 1760, and found that his wife and children had been graciously watched over and blessed by their Father in heaven. About a year earlier, when writing from Rhode Island to his wife, after alluding to the uncertainty of the time of his return, he said, “If we be willing to wait in patience the Lord’s time, He will be well pleased, and undoubtedly His blessing will follow, which will make truly rich. . . . His

ways are all ways of pleasantness, and His paths are indeed paths of true peace, and His mercies and loving-kindness are towards all them that daily dwell in His holy fear." Then, after referring to his prayers for his children, he adds, "I entreat there may be a turning to the Lord with the whole heart, and without reserves or excuses."

In 1764 the Lord again called him to visit the Friends in America, and he went through most of the States, although, in consequence of the death of his beloved wife, he returned home to his children rather sooner than he had at first anticipated; of this journey he gives us no particulars. He afterwards travelled on religious service in various parts of England, and one of his friends records that his love to the Redeemer's cause continued, and "the fervency of his mind was as strong as ever." Yet the prospect of the end, William Reckitt writes to this same friend, was "exceeding pleasant." "I have served a good Master," he adds, "but have ever looked on myself as one of the weakest of His servants; yet I have endeavoured to come up in faithful obedience to His will made manifest in me, and in this now have I great peace." He died at his home at Wainfleet in 1769, at the age of sixty-three. He had not been well for some time, but the end was almost sudden. His friends write of him as "a man of great integrity of heart, a lover of peace, deep in the ministry and powerful in prayer."

His was no path of ease, yet surely we may say of him, "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord!" His difficulties are not our difficulties, neither is His service our service. Nevertheless to each one of His followers Christ gives a work to do for Him.

"Think not too highly of thyself, O man !  
'Tis but one little thing thou hast to do ;  
Then if He find thee diligent and true,  
New tasks await thee and a wider span ;  
Perhaps a better knowledge of the plan  
Of that great web on which thy hand hath wrought.  
And be not thou too lowly in thy thought ;  
No man before thee since the world began  
Could do the work that lies upon *thy* loom :  
If thou neglect or slight it, it is loss  
To all the world in all the time to come.  
What is thy kinship to the Saviour worth  
If thou demean thee as the sons of earth ?  
And what if Jesus had despised His cross ?"

THE END.



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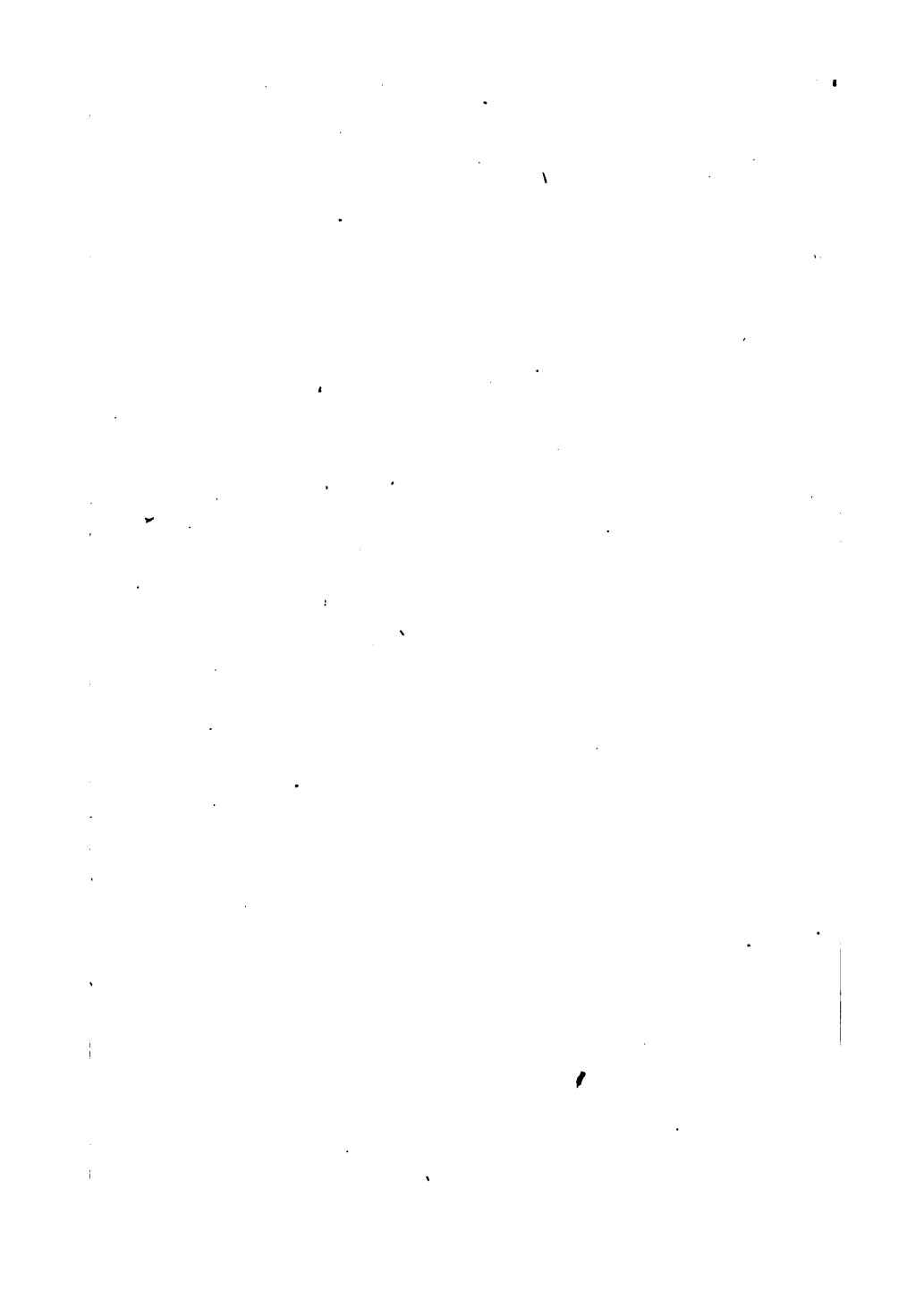
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